UNIVERSAL ART SERIES

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

CHARLES MARRIOTT

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LA MITRAILLEUSE

C. R. W. NEVINSON

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EDITED BY FREDERICK MARRIOTT

Modern Movements in Painting

BY

CHARLES MARRIOTT

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NOTE

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

BEFORE attempting to follow the course and development of any human activity it is necessary to decide how far to regard the activity as an isolated fact and how far to take into account what has been called the general stream of human progress. Thus, painting is primarily and essentially the art of using paint; and so it might be considered exclusively throughout its whole history from Altamira caves down to the present day. But painting is also a means of expression; and, as such, it has responded to every change in human affairs. Not to speak of such great events as the birth of Christianity, the Reformation and the French Revolution, it is probable that every minor phase of European history could be found reflected in European painting, and not merely in the choice of subjects. For example, the industrial movement of the mid-nineteenth century is faithfully reflected in the spirit and methods of both the English Pre-Raphaelites and the French Naturalists. With the most single eye upon the subject of painting it would be difficult to avoid occasional side-glances at these and similar events if the treatment were to be anything more than that of a technical treatise.

In starting with a comparatively late development of painting the problem is limited in extent only to be complicated in character. Both human life and the

art of painting are continuous and traditional; they do not make a clean break with the past at any point, and in taking up the art of painting at any period it seems necessary to say something about what went before. Thus, you can hardly talk about the movements associated with Post-Impressionism, the special subject of this book, without saying something about Impressionism; and when you begin to talk about that you are almost bound to refer to the moral, intellectual and material conditions of humanity in which it arose and by which it was affected. The difficulty is to know how far to go back and how far to look round.

The solution of the problem depends a good deal on the view of art that is taken; and here I can't help thinking that we complicate the subject unnecessarily by thinking and talking about "art." If we thought and spoke only of "the arts" of painting, drawing, sculpture, and so on, we should form clearer ideas not only about their respective characters but about the nature of their connection with the rest of life. That connection, though real, subtle and far-reaching, is not direct; it is through the personality of the artist. As a human being he is a man of his times; but as an artist he is a specialised craftsman; and every craft has a history and traditions of its own quite apart from what is happening in the rest of life. It does not follow that the craft itself will respond immediately to changes that undoubtedly affect the artist as a human being. The traditions of a craft and of life in general by no means coincide in origin and duration; and it is quite common to find a man living according to the traditions of one century and painting in the traditions of another.

This important truth is obscured by the habit of thinking and talking about art as a thing apart from the various means of its production, from craftsmanship, in fact. One paradoxical result is that the view of art generally taken is at the same time not human and not technical enough. " Art " is regarded as a special subject, distinct from life in general on the one hand and only politely connected with particular crafts on the other. The artist is looked upon as a specialised person with the special function of expression apart from what he actually does. The line is drawn, that is to say, between an imaginary being called the " artist " and the rest of humanity instead of between the painter or carver and his fellow creatures who work in other ways. This view, of course, limits the artist as a human being while it distracts attention from the limitations of his craft. His reactions to life are recognised, as they cannot fail to be, but only as more or less consciously experienced by the artist as artist ; and their effects are considered only in so far as they are expressed in choice of subject or theme or attitude to nature. They are not looked for in actual handiwork.

The view of art taken in these pages is the older, simpler one of a convenient general name for all the activities concerned in " the artificial disposition or modification of things to answer some special purpose," to quote a dictionary definition of the word. That is to say, the artist is regarded as primarily a craftsman, whose ordinary human susceptibilities may be taken for granted. This view, at any rate, leaves the artist open to every kind of influence, moral or material, that human beings can experience consciously

or unconsciously; and, at the same time, it assumes that sooner or later the effects of such influence will be found in the actual touch of the brush or chisel or whatever other implement the craftsman of any kind may happen to be using. It broadens the conception of the artist as man, but gives a definite character to his activities as craftsman, In other words, it ignores the specialised artist, but insists very emphatically upon the specialised painter, carver, tinker, tailor or candlestick-maker.

The advantage of this view with regard to the special purpose of this book is that it helps to decide how far and in what way to take into account the general human changes by which the arts have undoubtedly been affected. It is true, for example, that painting is a means of expression, but a moment's consideration shows that the same is true of all human activities, whether they are specifically "artistic" or not. The man of 1900 does not fight or cook or make boots in the same way as the man of 1500; and, equally with his painting, though perhaps not so obviously, his fighting, cooking or making boots to-day may be said to express the difference between the two centuries. The degree of expression depends not upon the conscious intention of the man, but upon the relative sensibility of his craft. Thus it may be granted readily that painting responds more freely and directly than boot-making to moral changes—whether general or individual. But the mistake is to suppose that the response is always voluntary or even conscious. Because what we call the arts reflect life and its changes with peculiar freedom and directness, it is too often

assumed that such is their deliberate purpose. A consequence is mistaken for an aim. One result is that some of the most profound influences upon the arts are ignored because they do not happen to be recognisably "artistic" in character, while others are exaggerated out of all proportion because they happen to be discussed in studios. As an index of his times too much is made of the artist as artist and too little of the artist as man.

Let us take a concrete illustration. I suppose that, since the birth of Christianity the event that has most profoundly affected the arts was the Reformation. But the most immediate and practical effects of the Reformation were felt by the artist not as artist but as tradesman. There was, to put it brutally, a slump in Madonnas and a corresponding demand, rapidly increasing, for Biblical illustrations and domestic subjects. The difference between pre and post-Reformation pictures by no means corresponded necessarily with differences of conviction in the artists concerned. On the other hand, there can be no doubt that the change in the nature of the demand did very soon react upon the arts in their most technical aspect. In England the Dissolution of the Monasteries was, in effect, a dissolution of the arts; and, even on the Continent, the decline of ecclesiastical power affected them deeply. Some arts, illuminating and glazing, for example, disappeared, and others were so changed in application that they became substantially new arts. For the purpose of this book we need only consider the art of painting. One effect of the change in the kind of picture demanded was to call for a new kind of talent in the painter. To

put it crudely, skill was transferred from his hand to his head. Not only was a premium put upon his powers of invention and illustration, but he was encouraged to give his own interpretation of nature.

The mediæval painter was told not only what to paint, but to a considerable extent how to paint it; the post-Reformation painter was not only given a free hand in both respects but actively encouraged to make full use of his freedom. The fact is recognised and acclaimed, but I don't think that the nature of its effect upon painting is fully appreciated. It was by no means an unmixed blessing. Subject and treatment being decided for him by authority or tradition, the opportunities of the mediæval painter were severely limited to the technical practice of his craft. He had to paint in a particular manner, but he could paint as well as he liked. The post-Reformation painter had unlimited opportunities in the region of ideas. How far this resulted in an actual decline in craftsmanship may be left an open question. I have heard one of the greatest living English painters, if not the greatest, give it as his considered opinion that an artist always does his best work when the subject and general conditions are chosen for him; and there is reason in it, on the principle of the shoemaker sticking to his last; but in order to allow as broad a meaning as possible to the word "craftsmanship" all we need remark here is that, with the new opportunities in the region of ideas, the nature of craftsmanship in painting was inevitably changed. To put it as simply as possible, you do not paint in the same way to express your own ideas and emotions about nature as to illustrate somebody else's;

and the probability is that in proportion as there is credit to be gained for ideas and emotions themselves the value of sheer craftsmanship will decline.

Earlier than the Reformation, and lending itself with peculiar facility to what may be called the artistic tendencies of that great event, there was something else that profoundly affected the nature of craftsmanship in painting: the introduction of oil painting. Here, again, though the fact is recognised, I do not think that its precise bearing is sufficiently appreciated. The differences between the work of the Primitives and later painters are put down too exclusively to moral and intellectual changes in the artists themselves. Not nearly enough is allowed for the mastery of a new medium with new possibilities of its own. Many of what are regarded as the virtues of the Primitives, and personally I regard them as very high virtues, were virtues of necessity. These early painters were limited to mediums which compelled a severe, summary style of drawing and put a premium upon pure colour and well organised design. That these limitations of medium happened to coincide with the limitations of subject and general treatment imposed by the Church was not more than a happy accident. Neither fresco nor tempera lends itself to the closely realistic imitation or the freely expressive interpretation of nature. On the other hand, they encourage, if they do not compel, the digestion of facts into form for the purposes of design which Mr. Roger Fry defines as the peculiar distinction of Florentine painting.

With the introduction of oil painting, the compulsion, if not the encouragement, was removed; and

painters found themselves in possession of a medium that lent itself with peculiar facility to the closely realistic imitation or the expressive interpretation of nature. The facility was not enjoyed all at once, and no doubt the virtues of the Primitives persisted in certain schools longer than they did in others; but they were no longer virtues of necessity. I am not saying that oil painting is essentially and in all respects "easier" than fresco or tempera painting, but only that it does not impose the same kind of discipline on the painter. Nor do I mean to suggest that there was more than an incidental connection between the mastery of oil painting and the Reformation. All I mean is that with the new freedom given by that event painters found themselves in possession of the means to develop it in the directions encouraged by the social changes involved and the new demand created.

These references to the past are only to suggest the range, variety and complexity of the causes that influence art, and to indicate some of the ways in which they work. There is no reason to suppose that artists are less susceptible than their fellow creatures to spiritual influences, or to deny that consciously "æsthetic" reasoning has anything to do with changes in their practice; but the great and universally recognised differences between pre and post-Reformation painting in Europe may be put down to two main causes; one broadly economical and the other narrowly technical. Between them but little room need be left for the conscious reactions of the artist in the sense of a being thinking and feeling, apart from the exercise of his craft, in a special habit of mind.

Nor are these references to the past without bearing on the present. They even help to indicate what is undoubtedly a weakness in modern movements: the conscious and immediate introduction of changes in practice which in the past proceeded automatically and slowly from the facts; in other words, the tendency to make deliberate aims of what should be regarded as consequences. For instance, one accompaniment of the change from Impressionism to post-Impressionism was a return to Primitive virtues—but without the same technical necessity. This tendency, however, is almost inevitable—and partly justified—in a highly self-conscious age, and it is by no means limited to art. In every department of life, nowadays, we are apt to aim directly at conditions that seem to us desirable, regardless of the facts that produced similar conditions in the past.

The view of art that is taken in these pages, then, is one that conceives of the artist as a being pretty much like the rest of us except as subject to the conditions of his particular craft. He is very much more of an ordinary man, and very much more definitely a craftsman than he is commonly considered—particularly by writers on art. Most of the mental and emotional characteristics that are supposed to be peculiar to the artist—imagination, invention, susceptibility to natural beauty, sense of colour, and so on—are in fact shared and often in high degree by thousands of people who, so far as it is possible to judge, have no artistic talent at all; and, on the other hand, a high degree of artistic talent of a definite kind is often found in persons deficient in the qualities that are supposed to be artistic.

To account for the former you have either to subscribe whole-heartedly to the doctrine of the "mute inglorious Milton," or else to say that their characteristics are only incidental to art. On the whole it seems more reasonable to say that the proof of the pudding is in the eating; that Milton was Milton by virtue of his peculiar articulateness in words, by virtue of his literary craftsmanship, in fact. What the poet learnt in suffering he learnt as an ordinary human being, and he taught it in song as a writer in the technical sense of the word apart from any consciously didactic tendency that he might have.

Biographies of artists, at any rate, support this view of art. Granting a usual, though by no means universal, higher degree of sensibility, the artist has the same experiences, moral and material, as the rest of humanity; he suffers the same passions and needs, loves, hates, eats and drinks in the same way, and, in the long run, responds to the same economic pressure. On the other hand, his expression of these common experiences is conditioned by the necessities, actual or traditional, of his particular craft. Everything he thinks or feels has to pass through that channel before it can be considered in an estimate of him as an artist. If, on the one hand, the medium determines the form of his expression, on the other it responds to his every peculiarity, though the signs may not be immediately recognisable. It may or may not be true that the later peculiarities of El Greco, often claimed as having some special æsthetic significance, were due to progressive astigmatism, but it is certainly true that the colour peculiarities of the late Sir W. Q. Orchardson and

Mr. John MacWhirter were due not to consciously æsthetic choice but to relative and progressive insensibility to the yellow and violet ends of the spectrum respectively. Sooner or later it all comes out in the craft; and if we had the necessary knowledge *ex pede Herculem* would be true of every touch of the painter's brush. Not only that, but his actual touch is by far the most personal thing there is about him. His ideas may be borrowed, his design, his colour, even his drawing may be imitated from somebody else's, but his handling is absolutely his own. Nor is this supreme individuality of touch limited to craftsmanship in what we call the arts; it is all implied in the legal importance attached to the finger-print and the signature.

CHAPTER II

NATURALISM

FOR all practical purposes the new movements in painting may be dated conveniently from the close of the nineteenth century, and the name " Post-Impressionism " covers them all. Who invented the name I do not know, but it is convenient for two reasons. It indicates the chronological sequence of the movements, and, in the sense of " After-Impression-ism," it describes their general character; though I am not prepared to say that this character is officially recognised by their exponents. There is another sense, equally unofficial, in which the name is convenient. Though Post-Impressionism is, fundamentally, a re-action from Impressionism, it includes and continues some of the characteristics of that movement; and the name avoids the mechanical inversion that would be implied in " Anti-Impressionism." In other words, it lays stress upon the evolutionary rather than upon the revolutionary character of the new tendencies in painting.

This evolutionary character should be borne in mind in thinking about any artistic movement. Not only is the art of painting continuous and traditional, but, strictly speaking, there is no such thing as a " new" movement in art. The germs of all the " 'isms " that were ever invented were contained in the first picture ever painted; and it is probable that if one went over

the history of painting from that point of view it would be possible, without straining the facts unduly, to find at one period or another an individual exponent of every " 'ism." All that a new movement in art really means is that, at a certain period, a sufficient number of artists show a sufficient number of common characteristics, always latent in that particular art, but not before evident enough to attract attention. The causes of such new movements are generally mixed ; partly economical, as by a change in the demand for pictures ; partly technical, as by the disappearance of an old or the appearance of a new artistic material or the invention of a new artistic process (mezzotint, aquatint and photography, for examples) ; and partly by some change in the æsthetic convictions of artists, generally dependent in turn upon some change in common philosophy, which leads them to bank, so to speak, upon some special aspect of their art.

Sometimes the new movement determined by one or all of these causes dies away before it can be given a name ; sometimes it survives long enough not only to bear a name but to create principles which are found presently to lead to a blind alley—often by the invention of a new artistic process as, in a sense, Realism was killed by photography ; and sometimes it opens the way to yet another new movment, whether by reaction or further development or a mixture of both by abandoning or even inverting some principles and confirming others as, indeed, Post-Impressionism proceeded from Impressionism. But through all these changes and developments and reactions art never, so to speak, toes the line again. It never goes back to " as

you were" without some gleanings from the last phase; and so its general progress is evolutionary.

Its general progress, moreover, is subject to the influences of race and individuality. This is not the point at which the vexed question of nationality in art can be most profitably discussed; it is enough for present purposes to say that Impressionism in England is demonstrably a different thing from Impressionism in France. Nor is it necessary at the moment to lay stress upon the influence of individual artists beyond saying that, like all other human activities, art is as individual as it is universal. Every change in practice is initiated by somebody, and it often happens that an individual artist will by his powers hold up the stream of evolution, so to speak, by founding a school of imitators which survives even after his death. Cézanne, who is generally looked upon as the Father of Post-Impressionism, was a case in point. It is but seldom, however, that an individual artist invents the name or deduces the principles of the movement that he is supposed to have initiated. What generally happens is that evidences of it are found in his work only after its philosophy has been formulated; and his paternity is claimed after he is dead. This is not necessarily to deny the justice of the claim; it is only another way of saying that the real revolutionary in art or anything else is seldom aware of being one. As a rule, if he thinks about the matter at all, he thinks that he is more true to tradition than anybody else.

Enough has been said to show that, though Post-Impressionism can be dated conveniently from the close of the nineteenth century, the germs of it must

be looked for some years earlier; in the bosom of Impressionism, in fact. It follows that in order to understand Post-Impressionism, whether as a reaction or as a continuation, we must know something about Impressionism. I do not propose to attempt an exhaustive analysis or description of that movement, but only to glance at its general character and at the circumstances that accompanied if they did not form it.

So far as we know the name "Impressionism" was not used officially before the sixties at earliest. Two accounts of its origin are referred to by Mr. D. S. MacColl in his article on the subject in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*; a study of which, by the way, may be recommended on account of its clear, exhaustive and impartial character. To quote Mr. MacColl: "The words *Impressioniste*, *Impressionisme*, are said to have arisen from a phrase in the preface to Manet's catalogue of his pictures exhibited in 1867 during the Exposition Universelle, from which he was excluded. 'It is the effect,' he wrote, 'of sincerity to give to a painter's works a character that makes them resemble a protest, whereas the painter has only thought of rendering his impression.' An alternative origin is a catalogue in which Claude Monet entitled a picture of sunrise at sea 'Une Impression.'" Since this picture was exhibited, at Nadar's in the Boulevard des Capucines, in 1874, among the works of a group of painters professing similar aims, it is likely that the official as distinct from the merely descriptive use of the word was adopted then.

But, as Mr. MacColl points out, apart from the sense in which Impressionism had always existed in painting,

the special tendency had been recognised before. It is usual to attribute the first conscious development of it to Constable, who is sometimes hailed as the true Father of Impressionism. There is no need to quarrel with this attribution; it is undoubtedly true that Constable did lay the particular emphasis upon truth to the momentary aspect of things, or at any rate upon weather in the broad sense, that afterwards became formulated into a theory of representation by such painters as Claude Monet and Camille Pissarro, or rather by their later followers. How far the French Impressionists were directly influenced by Constable is hardly more than a matter of speculation. But, as helping to define the nature of Impressionism, it is worth while considering what it was precisely that Constable broke away from. If the story of Sir George Beaumont and the "brown tree" whose absence he deplored from one of Constable's pictures means anything at all, it means that what Constable rejected was not so much a conventional way of looking at nature as a conventional way of picture making.

The distinction is important, because people often talk as if Constable discovered nature. They imply, if they do not say, that no landscape painter before him had ever noticed the play of light or the flicker of leaves, or had, so to speak, the sense to come in when it rained. The truth is, of course, that the landscape painters before Constable were perfectly well aware of these aspects of nature, but, for various reasons, they did not choose to consider them. Sir George Beaumont stuck out for the "brown tree" in the interests of not what he believed to be truth to nature, but what he

regarded as the amenities of painting. Constable decided to disregard those amenities, and what he really rejected was formal design. The parallel in literature to his action in painting was the revolt against " poetic diction " and the heroic couplet of Pope. It is incredible that the champions of those conventions really supposed that people talked like that. They employed the conventions because, rightly or wrongly, they believed them better suited than natural speech and rhythm to the purposes of poetry. What Constable really initiated in painting was a bid for Naturalism. In so far as it was new, it was not so much a new way of looking at nature as a new way of treating nature for the purposes of painting.

It is not necessary to go very deeply into the literature of the period to recognise that Naturalism was then very much " in the air." Wordsworth, Byron, Shelley and Scott were all writing and each giving a different turn to the movement away from classical conventions by the bent of his genius. The novels of Thomas Love Peacock (1785-1866), friend of Shelley and father-in-law of George Meredith, reflect the discussions of the times. In *Gryll Grange*, for example, there is a dinner-table symposium on " Music and Painting " which throws an interesting light on the question at issue. It shows, incidentally, that the supporters of the classical tradition in painting were perfectly well aware of what they sacrificed in the interests of design, and that they could give a good account of their reasons for the sacrifice.

Another thing brought out by Peacock's novels is that the Naturalistic movement in literature and the

arts was accompanied by a corresponding movement in religion and science. It was a reaction, not so much from authority as from the ideas that authority was based upon. Roughly, it corresponded to a reaction from deductive in favour of inductive reasoning; that is to say, in favour of reasoning from particulars to generals instead of the other way about. In philosophy, of course, induction was at least as old as Bacon, but it was only now being applied extensively to practical affairs, including the practice of the arts and sciences and the interpretation in conduct of religious belief.

We need not assume that Constable took part in any such discussions as that described in Peacock's novel, or that he bothered his head about inductive reasoning. All I mean is that what he was trying to do in painting was in sympathy with the practical philosophy of his times. There was a general disposition to pay more attention than hitherto to what are called the facts of nature for all the purposes of life, including art. With full appreciation of the benefits to art of this return to nature we must not forget, if we are to understand the further progress of Impressionism and the subsequent reaction from it, that it involved a risk, if not an actual disadvantage. Painting is, after all, a traditional craft, and its conventions, though they may be abused by authority or made sterile by inferior talent, are in the long run based upon common-sense. "Back to nature" as a gospel in art has, in fact, a trace of the same fallacy that is present in "back to the land" as a social panacea. Grant that in Constable's time the Classical convention in landscape painting had become sterile, it had behind it originally a wise

recognition of certain elementary facts of human pyschology and certain consequences of the nature of paint.

This will be made clearer if we compare Constable with a contemporary painter of at least equal rank. Turner was as close a student of nature as Constable, his researches into the nature of light were as deep and extensive and much more methodical, and he was at least as impatient of authority; but he was much more tolerant of the classical convention. In principle, if not in practice, he accepted the "brown tree." Something must be allowed for differences of early training, Turner having been nourished on pictures before he began to paint from nature, but when that is taken into account it remains true that he showed a keener sense than Constable of both the intrinsic value of design as a short cut to attention and hold upon memory and the intrinsic value of paint as an artistic material apart from its capacity for representing the facts of appearance. One has only to compare "Crossing the Brook" with the "The Hay-Wain" to see that Turner relied far more than Constable upon artistic expedients to gain his effects. With equal knowledge of nature he had a keener sense of the picture; as one dramatist with an equal knowledge of human character and life may have a keener sense of the theatre than another. That this gift sometimes led Turner into theatricality may be readily admitted. But, having regard to all the conditions of painting and the human purpose of pictures, he was a better craftsman and a better psychologist than Constable. He gave new life to the classical convention because he

employed it with due regard to the psychological and technical truths which it embodied.

We are too apt to regard formal design in art as a purely decorative consideration, forgetting that it " works " in a practical way as well. To take a simple illustration from literature, verse is more easily learnt and remembered than prose. In one of his lectures on poetry Sir A. T. Quiller-Couch pointed out that " Thirty days hath September," throws light on one probable reason for the origin of metrical expression ; and everybody who has come in contact with medical students knows that they make use of doggerel verse in learning the facts of anatomy and the formulas of the Pharmacopœia. The extreme formality that the Naturalists rebelled against had its practical advantages ; and the amount of Pope remembered by the general reader is out of all proportion to the poetic value of anything he said. It is due to the regularity of the heroic couplet. Again, it is an open question whether the modern tendency to *vers libre* is not due as much to an unconscious recognition of the disadvantages of the informal prose encouraged by Realism as to conscious rebellion against formal verse. This is not to deny that what we call " style " may exist in Realistic prose ; it is only to comment on the susceptibility of the human mind to definite rhythm. Herbert Spencer wrote an essay dealing with style on physical principles with the general thesis that " the most successful form of sentence is one which guides the thought of the hearer or reader along the line of least resistance." It is hardly necessary to dwell on the importance of rhythm in this connection. This applies

even to the most technical or "realistic" subjects in literature. A friend of mine who is a distinguished physician pointed out that the reason why most scientific text-books are hard to read and easy to forget is because they ignore the rhythmical element in style.

All these illustrations from literature can be applied with equal force to painting. The truth is that in any form of art you have to consider something more than vivid representation of the facts of nature. You have to take into account the peculiarities of the human mind and the capacities and limitations of the medium. It is not an æsthetic question, but a practical one—if they are not essentially the same. Rhythmical design, for example, which was one of the features of the classical convention, not only guides the eye of the observer along the line of least resistance in taking in the picture, but also encourages the expressive and characteristic use of the tools and materials of painting. Skill goes a long way, of course, but close representation of the facts of nature does limit freedom of hand. Detailed accuracy is hardly compatible with a sweeping statement, and it is in a sweeping statement that the intrinsic properties of paint are best perceived. It might be going too far to say that a picture by Turner is always more easily taken in than a picture by Constable, or that the paint in the one is always given a better chance, apart from what it represents, than it is in the other; but, speaking generally, both the general design and the quality of the Turner are better remembered. The difference, in terms of literature, is not that between *poetry* and prose—for Constable may be called equally poetical—but that

between *verse* and prose, the verse form both making a deeper impression on the memory and giving more value to words apart from their dictionary meaning.

A distinction between design and composition in painting might be difficult to uphold, but the words as used by most people certainly convey a difference in degree. Rightly or wrongly, we think of the difference indicated as one of procedure. When we speak of a painter as a good designer, we think of him as conceiving the design first and then substantiating it with the facts, which are modified, often considerably, in the process; whereas when we say that a picture is well composed we seem to mean that the facts were considered first and then arranged in an effective manner without more modification than brushwork demands. It does not follow that the respective painters actually worked in that order; the difference felt is one of mental approach. At any rate, we may say fairly that design bears first reference to the medium and composition to the facts. Thus we speak of a design *in* sepia but of a composition *of* trees.

Now, though Naturalistic painting certainly admits of good composition; the pictures of Constable, for example, are generally well composed; it hardly allows of design in the more emphatic sense of the word. That is often looked upon as an advantage in the interests of truth; and to say that a painter has "imposed an arbitrary design upon nature" is a common reproach. But what is "nature"? Does it mean exclusively the facts to be represented or does it include the nature of the painter's mind and that of the percipient and the nature of the medium? Unless it is

used in this inclusive meaning, "Truth to nature" begs all the questions. An outline drawing is certainly an arbitrary design in the sense that it does not really represent the facts, which have no outlines; but in the larger sense it may be quite true to nature as it is peculiarly true to the nature of the means by which it is produced; that is to say, to the point of the pen or pencil.

This truth to the nature of the medium, with the corresponding effect of truth to the mind which it conveys, is a point that is often overlooked even by people who recognise the effect of truth that is established in the mind by design itself. For example, in his brilliant essay on "Significant Form" as the one quality common to all works of visual art, Mr. Clive Bell* seems to me to ignore the part played by the medium in determining the significance of that form. He allows, it is true, for the question of colour—"You cannot conceive a colourless line or a colourless space; neither can you conceive a formless relation of colours"—but he allows nothing for the actual nature of the stuff; its consistency, relative tractability and so on. It is obvious that form which may be significant in oil paint ceases to be significant when reproduced in mosaic or stained glass without the considerable modifications indicated by the nature of those materials. As a matter of fact, the six illustrations to Mr. Bell's book are in themselves remarkable witnesses to this truth. In all of them you feel the part played by the material in determining the nature of the form. The eleventh century "Persian Dish," for example, illustrates

* *Art*; by Clive Bell. (Chatto & Windus, 1914).

the calligraphic style of brushwork suggested if not compelled by the materials employed. You feel in it the very gesture of the artist. I am inclined to believe that " Significant Form " is nothing other than form in which the record of vision is felt to be compatible with free and characteristic movement of the human hand in or with the particular medium employed. With a less tractable material you expect a stiffer movement. In so far as the form, however true to the facts of nature or distinguished in the abstract, is obviously at the cost of the freedom allowed by the nature of the medium, it ceases to be significant. Or, in other words, it ceases to be the signature of the artist.

I am not trying to prove that Naturalism, which may be regarded as the mother of Impressionism, is incapable of " Significant Form," nor did I compare those very great painters, Constable and Turner, in order to exalt one at the expense of the other. All I want to bring out is that every special " tendency " in art has the defect of its qualities ; and that it is well to take them into account from the very beginning. If landscape painting had ended with Constable and Turner we need regard their peculiarities only as showing the individual characteristics of two painters of genius ; but, since the tendency in landscape painting emphasised, if not introduced, by Constable, did undoubtedly hold the field throughout the nineteenth century, with a more and more logical development of its peculiar aims, comparison of him with Turner has a more general value.

Briefly, the return to nature which for convenience

we call Naturalism, while it encouraged the more vivid representation of the facts, particularly the facts of weather or atmospheric conditions, involved of necessity a corresponding disregard of the kind of truth to nature which is established in the mind by design itself and by the intrinsic properties, the authentic voice, of the medium. Strictly speaking, as I tried to show in referring to "Significant Form," these two means of truth are interdependent; since design is not really significant unless it is determined by the nature of the medium. To put it simply, and in a phrase that happens to be popular, Naturalism discouraged the direct action of design.

To balance accounts it might very well be claimed that Naturalism, and particularly the refinement of Naturalism that we call Impressionism, encouraged the direct action of conditions. If we feel and remember a typical Turner mainly through pattern, it is equally true that we feel and remember a typical Constable, and still more a typical Monet, through general tone or atmosphere. What sticks in the mind is a quiver or a sparkle or a glow; the quality of the hour or season. There is, by the way, a striking analogy to this in music. Anybody familiar with the classical composers, Bach, Mozart or Beethoven, can whistle or hum from memory the leading subjects from their works. They are eminently quotable. But it is extremely difficult to quote in this way from perhaps equally familiar works by Debussy, whose aims in music might very well be compared to those of Monet in painting. You remember Debussy rather by recalling the emotional condition induced by hearing the

work. Certainly in music, and to a certain extent in painting, it might be claimed that the intrinsic as distinct from the descriptive or representative properties of the medium are involved in this effect.

At bottom, I suppose, it is a question of temperament; whether, to put it broadly, you are more susceptible to pattern or to glow. But, taking the subject "by and large," and allowing for every sort of mind and every possibility of the medium, I do not think it can be denied that the direct action of design is more evident than the direct action of conditions. If we were dealing only with individual artists it would be enough to say that one is more likely to appeal to one sort of mind and another to another sort; but we are dealing with a movement which influenced a considerable body of painting for a considerable number of years. I cannot help thinking that the comparative unpopularity of Impressionism was due to the neglect of design in the more emphatic sense of the word that its practice involved. There is, so to speak, less to "get hold of" in an Impressionist painting. The facts of nature may be there with great particularity, and the truth of atmosphere and beauty of colour may be evident to anybody with an eye; but there is lacking the grip upon the attention that, in literature, is secured by some such expedient as "Punch, brothers, punch with care; Punch in the presence of the passen*gere*." Still, since Impressionism did survive for a considerable number of years, there must have been something in the general conditions of life that was favourable to its development.

CHAPTER III

THE BIRTH OF IMPRESSIONISM

ONE has only to glance back over the nineteenth century to see that the circumstances were favourable. Everything conspired to encourage belief in the all-sufficiency of the facts. It is customary to speak of the eighteenth rather than the nineteenth century as pre-eminently "the age of reason." So it was in the sense of *deductive* reasoning; from generals to particulars, or from principles to facts. In religion, politics, economics, art and science the general tendency was to start with accepted principles and interpret the facts according to them. The principles were often, according to our ideas, mistaken, but the reasoning was generally sound; progress, if in the wrong direction, was orderly and methodical, and the surface of society presented a peculiarly neat appearance. Even the French Revolution, which closed the century, might be looked upon as deduction gone mad. Starting from large generalities, such as "the rights of man," "liberty, equality and fraternity," rather than from the facts of humanity as observed with an open mind; it was a violent and mechanical inversion of aristocratic principles rather than a new interpretation of life. The premises were different, but the method of reasoning was pretty much the same. The guillotine was a practical syllogism. If all men were not equal, then the taller ones must be shortened accordingly.

The nineteenth century, on the other hand, was an age of *inductive* reasoning. As if warned by recent events, particularly by the example of Napoleon, that ideas did not work, humanity turned with feverish energy to investigation of the facts. In every department of life the tendency was the same. It was an age of what has been called "rampant Individualism." Forms of religious dissent multiplied, each based upon some different interpretation of the Bible, and presently the Bible itself was attacked by the men of science. The *Origin of Species* was not published until 1859, but the conditions favourable to its reception had been preparing for some time, and thenceforward it was the gospel of everybody with any pretensions to being an advanced thinker.

Somewhere in a book or essay on Tolstoy, Mr. Aylmer Maude observes: "But there are cases in which we find our different senses combining to deceive us, and then we call it a 'fact.'" For some reason or other the nineteenth century was peculiarly subject to that form of credulity. The courage with which men like Huxley investigated the facts of nature was only equalled by their blind confidence in the means of investigation. It never seems to have occurred to them that, putting on one side the fallibility of their instruments, their own senses might play them a trick. They allowed nothing for the sub-conscious mind. They were ready to question any belief that had been evolved by the slow experience of the race, but the moment they saw a fact they fell down and worshipped it.

All this was reflected in art. I do not mean, of course, that the painters of the nineteenth century—any more

than those of the eighteenth—were consciously inspired by its philosophers. It is not necessary to have heard of Evolution in order to live and work by it; what is called the time-spirit, with its machinery of demand, will see to that. Being men of their times the painters of the nineteenth century followed its general tendency; and its general tendency was away from design and "back to nature" for the explanation of everything.

There were exceptions, of course. Leaving out Turner, who painted well into the nineteenth century, there were, throughout its course, painters who combined a closer truth to nature with more or less formal design. They shared in the return to nature but kept within the traditions of painting, that, whether consciously or not, were derived from the truths of human psychology and the nature of the medium. And, apart from these exceptions, the painters of the first half of the century seem to have held up rather than hurried the tendency to Impressionism as we now understand it.

There was, for example, the important group of French painters known as the Barbizon School. Assuming that the impulse to Impressionism really did come from Constable, it must have struck everybody who has thought about the matter that the special characteristics of that movement were latent rather than evident in the works of Corot, Daubigny, Rousseau, Troyon and Jacque—to name only a few of the painters who may be supposed to have been inspired by him. On the whole, they show rather less of those characteristics, at any rate so far as research into conditions of

light and atmosphere is concerned, than Constable himself, and considerably more attention to design. At the same time they were more Naturalistic than, say, the Dutch landscape painters of the seventeenth century, Hobbema and Ruisdael, or even than our own Gainsborough and Turner—ignoring, of course, all individual differences and taking account only of general attitude to nature.

To illustrate more clearly what I mean, paintings of oak trees by Hobbema, Crome and Rousseau respectively, would show affinities, but at the same time successive advances in realistic truth. The Barbizon painters were Naturalists, but they were still poetic Naturalists; which means to say that with all their enthusiasm for the facts they still allowed for the general or poetic ideas about nature which haunt the sub-conscious mind of humanity.

They differed among themselves, of course; they did not all give the classical turn to Naturalism which distinguished Corot, for example. Though even Corot was classical in a new sense. To quote M. Léonce Bénédite *: "He is fond of peopling his woods and his ponds with nymphs and hamadryads. But these are not vain, useless and obscure figures meant to ennoble the scene. In Corot's pictures the goddesses seem to be emanations from the very places." But, taking Rousseau as "the prototype of the landscape-painter in the school," we may say that, even less than Constable, the Barbizon painters relied upon the facts exclusively. Whether by temperament or with intention

* *Great Painters of the Nineteenth Century.* By Léonce Bénédite, keeper of the Luxembourg (Sir Isaac Pitman & Son, Ltd., 1910).

they made more allowance for general truth in the sense of taking into account not only the vision of the painter, but the mind of the observer and the character of the medium and the conventions derived from them.* In this connection the remarks of M. Bénédite on Rousseau are worth quoting. "He occupies an exceptional place in landscape-painting, because he realises all that romanticism had dreamt of in contemplating nature, and because by his anxious thirst for truth, his scruples, which ended even by becoming morbid, he heralded the coming evolution of landscape-painting, which is to become more and more analytic and objective."

There is a close parallel in literature to the general attitude of the Barbizon School in painting in our own Lake School of poets. The parallel is all the more striking because both groups were connected with and inspired by particular places. Like the Barbizon painters, the Lake poets were both Naturalists and Romantics, using those words for convenience rather than officially. At any rate, in intention they got closer to nature than the poets of the eighteenth century; but, at the same time, they were tolerant of both general ideas and formal design.

Taking Wordsworth as the counterpart of Rousseau, as "the prototype of the landscape-poet of the school," one is struck by certain similarities. He also realised "all that romanticism had dreamt of in contemplating

* For all its deliberately pedantic language the following, which Peacock puts into the mouth of "Mr. Derrydown," in *Melincourt*, is a fair definition of truth in the larger meaning.

"The truth of things is nothing more than an exact view of the necessary relations between object and subject, in all the modes of reflection and sentiment which constitute the reciprocities of human association."

nature," and he also had " an anxious thirst for truth," and " scruples, which ended even by becoming morbid." In some of his poems Naturalism descended into banality. But, though he discarded " poetic diction " in one sense, he preserved it in another; and, so far as metrical arrangement was concerned, he followed and continued the traditions of his art.

If in this respect he resembles Rousseau, in another he might almost be said to resemble Corot; in the solution of the facts of nature in medium and temperament so that what comes over to us is a distillation rather than a description or representation. Taking the " Ode on Intimations of Immortality " as authentic Wordsworth, we may fairly say that Corot painted many landscapes in the same spirit. They have " the visionary gleam," they are full of " fallings from us, vanishings," and if they do not affect us with " Blank misgivings of a Creature, Moving about in worlds not realised," it is only because in their presence " Our souls have sight of that immortal sea Which brought us hither."

A propos Wordsworth's preoccupation with the subject of " poetic diction," relieving it from classical tyranny on the one hand but distinguishing it from prose on the other, it has often occurred to me that the difference between the early Naturalistic painters of the nineteenth century and the Impressionists proper who succeeded them is closely akin to that between verse and prose. Just as Wordsworth loosened the classical formality but still kept to the verse form, so the early Naturalists loosened their designs to allow of closer truth to natural effect, but still remained, so

to speak, metrical in composition. But between them and such painters as Monet and Pissarro, there is a kind of difference that, leaving the question of "poetry" in the sense of poetical feeling entirely open, might very well be compared to that between Wordsworth and, say, Mr. Thomas Hardy, in his landscape descriptions. Poetry is common to both, but, putting on one side all differences in mood or attitude to nature, there is a definite difference in form. When, in a newspaper article, I suggested a similar difference in painting, I was taken to task by a correspondent for trying to make "watertight compartments"; but it still seems to me that the distinction is valid, and that it really does suggest the *kind* of difference involved.

There is, however, one important difference between the two forms as they undoubtedly exist in literature and as they may be supposed to exist in painting; and this bears upon what I believe to be one of the reasons for the subsequent reaction from Impressionism. In literature the prose form is perfectly compatible with the nature of the medium, that is to say with the most expressive use of words; I have an uneasy suspicion that the prose form is not really compatible with the nature of the medium in painting, that is to say with the most expressive use of paint. It seems to me that the true conditions of painting are on the other side of verse, so to speak, that is to say in the direction of music.

But, to leave debatable ground, the deliberate exploitation of the movement initiated by Constable, if the credit belongs to him, does not seem to have begun before the middle of the nineteenth century. It is only

then that we can say that Naturalism gave birth to Impressionism as we understand the word. Several explanations might be advanced for this delay. It might be said that beginnings are always tentative, that the time-spirit takes time to develop, that old beliefs die hard, and that the full implications of new knowledge are not immediately recognised. Against this it must be pointed out that even in the heyday of Impressionism there were painters who treated the facts of nature with the mental reserve that belonged to older traditions.

"Oh," you will say, "but you must allow for individual genius." That is true; and the allowance ought to be broader in kind than is commonly intended. "Genius," though it undoubtedly means a special aptitude for some particular thing, also means a clear and wide understanding of things in general. The greater the genius the less likely he is to be carried away by the passing stream. He responds, but, having wider bearings, he keeps his head. The greater artists of any period might be compared to taller travellers who, by virtue of their height, are able to indicate and follow the general direction without going into every dip and turn of the road. Standing higher they see further—both backwards and forwards. As a rule they are less affected than their fellows by current philosophy. Or, rather, they interpret it in more general terms.

Examples of such men could be found in every "movement," great or small, in every department of human thought. They are distinguished by a certain breadth of mind which, while they are in full sympathy

with the movement, relates them to what came before and what comes after. Thus, Erasmus was in as full sympathy with the principles of the Reformation as was Luther; but he did not, like the latter, reduce those principles to arbitrary action. A later example in religion was John Wesley. He was a passionate reformer and revivalist, but "he did everything that strong words against separation could do to bind his societies to the Church of England." In natural science we have the example of Darwin as compared with Huxley. With a not less passionate desire for truth than Huxley, Darwin gave to the facts more of the benefit of the doubt. With reference to accepted beliefs he does not appear to have been conscious of the subversive nature of his doctrine. But, though more in sorrow than in anger, it was precisely the subversive nature of the new knowledge that Huxley insisted upon. Call it superior genius, call it greater urbanity, or humanity, or imagination, or humour, or what you like, there was something in such men as Erasmus, Wesley and Darwin that enabled them to share the new belief concerned with all their hearts, but at the same time to avoid that hardening of its principles that we call heretical.

Let us put it this way. Every form of human belief, however well founded, contains its peculiar superstition. So long as the belief, whatever it may be, is held so to speak unconsciously, with the full consent of all the faculties, without picking and choosing, the superstition contained in it is generally avoided; but when the belief becomes conscious there is a risk that the superstition will be elevated into a heresy.

For the sake of greater clearness let us examine the words themselves. Looking up "superstition," I see that it is derived from the Latin *superstitio*, *superstitionis*, "a standing still at, a standing in fear or amazement." Looking up "heresy," I see that it is derived from the Greek *hairesis*, "a taking, a choosing." In illustration my dictionary gives the following remarkable quotation from Coleridge:

"When I call duelling, and similar aberrations of honour, a moral *heresy*, I refer to the force of the Gr. *hairesis*, as signifying a principle or opinion taken up by the will for the will's sake, as a proof or pledge to itself of its own power of self-determination, independent of all other motives."

Now, whether the heresy comes at the end of the belief or shows itself at the beginning or at any other stage, it is pretty certain that the greater exponents of the belief escape the heresy. They are too full of the impulse given by the belief to stand "in fear or amazement" at any of its implications or to pick and choose among its characteristics. Before they reach that stage they are already in sight of the belief that is coming, and so the danger of heresy for them is past.

The prevailing belief of the nineteenth century was belief in nature; its prevailing heresy was unquestioning acceptance of the facts. The belief became a heresy when the century, standing in superstitious amazement at its own discoveries, took up the facts "by the will for the will's sake, as a proof to itself of its own power of self-determination, independent of all other motives." In other words, when the belief became conscious. Whether from the comparative lack of the

greatest men, or from the decline in the impulse given by the belief, a slackening of pace, so to speak, the heresy did not appear until about the middle of the century.

Reflected in art, the belief became a heresy when Naturalism became aware of itself in the form of Impressionism. The distinguishing characteristic of this heresy was unquestioning acceptance of individual vision in the optical meaning of the word. Even with the broadest view of Impressionism I do not see how we are to escape this heretical character. Thus, in his extremely sympathetic review of the subject in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* Mr. D. S. MacColl says: "At the earlier date (that of Manet's catalogue) the only meaning of the word was a claim for individual liberty of subject and treatment." But the claim itself brings the movement into the region of heresy. It implies the conscious will to be original. The earlier painters did not make such claims. They "did it," so to speak, unconsciously. Constable's rejection of the "brown tree" was the rejection of a positive command; it was not a positive claim to trust exclusively to the evidence of his eyes, though that may have followed. The distinction may seem a fine one, but it is that which distinguishes a heresy from a belief.

On the other hand, it must be said that the leaders of Impressionism were not nearly so heretical in practice as their followers. They allowed much more for the general truths of art. Manet, in particular, appreciated the direct action of design. Impressionism, in fact, shows the same paradox as other movements: that its more special characteristics are to be

found in disciples rather than in apostles. A person who had been told all about the theory of Impressionism might see an exhibition of works by Monet, Manet, Pissarro and Renoir, and, if he were not told their names, remain quite unaware that he was looking at Impressionist pictures. In this connection Mr. MacColl is worth quoting again. "The word (Impressionist) therefore belongs to the class of nicknames or battle-names, like 'Romanticist,' 'Naturalist,' 'Realist,' which preceded it, words into which the acuteness of controversy infuses more of theoretical purport than the work of the artists denoted suggests to later times. The painters included in such a 'school' differ so much among themselves, and so little from their predecessors compared with the points of likeness, that we may well see in these recurring effervescences of official and popular distaste rather the shock of individual force in the artist measured against contemporary mediocrity than the disturbance of a new doctrine."

Still, allowing for this, as also for the natural disposition of a painter to justify aims which had been questioned—Manet had been excluded from the Exposition Universelle of 1867—it cannot be denied that there was in the discussions of the group associated with him, a note of protest that was new in the history of painting; and, in the long run, a protest means a heresy. Nor, though it is true, as Mr. MacColl claims, that the Impressionist painters employed selection and recognised emotion, is it any the less true that the basis of their art was individual vision in the optical meaning of the word. To a degree that was new in painting, at

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any rate so far as light and atmosphere were concerned, they swore by the facts, and placed implicit confidence in the means of their perception. This heretical character of the movement rapidly hardened, and its hardening was amusingly in correspondence with a similar process in other departments of life and opinion. The nineteenth century had become aware of itself.

CHAPTER IV

IMPRESSIONISM IN FRANCE

ALTHOUGH in one form or another the tendencies associated with Impressionism soon penetrated to every country in Europe, it is convenient to follow the movement in France, where its most logical development took place. Equally for reasons of convenience we may limit our attention mainly to three leading figures: Edouard Manet, Claude Monet, and Camille Pissarro. Not only were they great painters—Monet is still alive—but each of them represented a different aspect of the movement to which they all subscribed. There were many other Impressionist painters, some of them, such as Degas and Renoir, perhaps equally great; but none of them brought any new principle into painting that was not at least indicated by one or other of the three painters named. Not only that, but these three painters, in the order given above, may be said to represent a progressive hardening of the principles of Impressionism; Manet being the most subjective and synthetic, and Pissarro the most objective and analytic in his methods.

But before we concentrate upon these three painters we must consider yet another figure with whom they were associated, at any rate in general attitude to nature; the writer, Emile Zola (1840-1902). It is not necessary to establish a definite connection between him and any individual painter of the group; and,

indeed, his direct influence on a landscape painter like Monet might be difficult to prove; but there can be no question that he was the intellect of Impressionism as a general artistic belief. Whatever Impressionism is or is not it is a form of Realism; indeed, Zola himself called the Impressionist painters Realists. All such words, though convenient, are unsatisfactory as definitions; but if we describe Impressionism in painting as a refinement of Realism with particular reference to conditions of light and atmosphere, we shall be near enough to the truth for practical purposes.

This is not the place for a full-dress criticism of Zola as a writer; but, the conditions and methods of literature being more generally understood than those of painting, a few remarks upon him may throw light upon the movement with which he was associated. In certain respects Zola was the most characteristic figure of the second half of the nineteenth century. He accepted the theory of Evolution in its most extreme consequences, as regards both the moral and material nature of man; and he had implicit confidence in the evidence of the senses. He swore by the facts. He was a great writer, but at this distance of time it is fair to say that his work was a crowning example of induction gone mad. Facing and documenting the facts with an "anxious thirst for truth" and "scruples which ended even by becoming morbid"—to apply M. Bénédite's remarks upon Rousseau—he arrived at the most fantastic conclusions. His literary gospel was that of the "slice of life," which, as somebody wittily observed, is no more like life than a slice of beef is like a cow. More completely than anybody else he

stands for the prevailing heresy of the nineteenth century as expressed in literature.

In a daily newspaper I have just come across a review of " Letters of Anton Tchekov," translated by Constance Garnett. Among the quotations is the following parable :

" Noah had three sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth. Ham only noticed that his father was a drunkard, and completely lost sight of the fact that he was a genius, that he had built an ark and saved the world.

" Writers must not imitate Ham, bear that in mind."

Zola did not bear it in mind. He did not, to quote Peacock's " Mr. Derrydown," sufficiently take into account " the necessary relations between object and subject in all the modes of reflection and sentiment which constitute the reciprocities of human association." His defect was not that he dwelt unduly upon what is called the seamy side of life, but that he dwelt upon it with a deliberately blinkered mind. He excluded from observation all those " modes of reflection and sentiment " which condition the value of the evidence. In other words, he mistook accuracy for truth.

That was the cardinal defect of Impressionism. The question of subject is irrelevant ; the point is that the writer or painter looked at the subject with a deliberately narrowed vision. That the narrowing was aimed at sincerity does not redeem it. Even the consciousness of sincerity is a prejudice to truth. It means the exclusion of some part of the observer ; whether he calls it " sentimental prejudice " or " memory," or " association," or anything else, it is part of him and as such

must be included if his record of the facts is to be truthful. There is no escape from Coleridge's definition of a heresy.

At the risk of tedium I have dwelt upon this heretical character of Impressionism, of Realism in general, in fact, because it really does help to distinguish Impressionism in painting from anything that had gone before, and also helps to explain why, sooner or later, a reaction from it was bound to follow. Strictly speaking it was not so much a difference in the painter's attitude to nature as in the painter's attitude to himself. It is extremely unlikely that the older painters, the Barbizon group, for example, were conscious of allowing for "all the modes of reflection and sentiment which constitute the reciprocities of human association"; that they deliberately employed the direct action of design and recognised the intrinsic nature of the medium by which it is determined; the point is that they took the whole of themselves for granted. They did not pick and choose among their faculties. The technical consequences followed.

The Impressionist painters did pick and choose among their faculties. By the very consciousness of sincerity they made a distinction between unguarded vision, with its full complement of memories and associations, and observation in the narrower sense of the word. That their observation was directed not upon the bare facts but upon their individual impression of them does not affect the question; the point is that it was directed. They remembered individuality, but forgot humanity in their conception of truth. In their case, too, the technical consequences followed.

They did not so much reject design as pursue a specialised truth in which it ceased to operate; they did not so much violate their medium as ignore it.

The more I think it over the more I am struck by the close connection between mind and medium in art. The moment you begin to play tricks with the one you compromise the other. So long as you handle it with a single mind, with no theoretical axes to grind, the medium will respond to all your moods and aspirations; but at the least hint of heresy, of any principle or opinion "taken up by the will for the will's sake," the medium begins to protest. Another way of putting it would be to say that mind is separated from the facts of nature by the thickness of the medium, whatever it may be. Though we may, as Mr. MacColl says, absolve the Impressionist painters from the charge of "mere exact copying," it is nevertheless true that in proportion as you play the game of art closely up to the real aspects of nature there is a risk that the medium will get up on its hind legs, so to speak, and say: "What about it? Where do I come in?"

There is a familiar, practical illustration of this in painting. The commonest popular objection to Impressionist pictures is the paint itself. People say: "I can't see the trees for the paint"; and you will see them screwing up their eyes and standing at different distances in order to get the focus at which the paint becomes the subject. You never see them looking like that at any of the Old Masters, though several of them, Rembrandt, for example, painted quite as thickly and, so to speak, untidily as any of the Impressionists. The difference is that Rembrandt used his paint or, rather,

his mind, without any segregation of its faculties. He looked at the facts of nature with his whole mind; and, consequently, the balance between the descriptive and the expressive capacities of his paint were automatically adjusted. Looking at the facts of nature with a partial mind, the Impressionist painter of necessity pushes the descriptive capacity of his paint farther than it will go without some protest from the very nature of the substance.

Here, again, a reference to the more generally familiar methods of literature may help to make the matter clearer. In the last analysis, what Zola forgot in his pursuit of "the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth," was the nature of words. He forgot that the only kind of truth possible to the writer is strictly determined by that nature. Words have both a descriptive and an expressive value; that is to say, a direct emotional action as well as a dictionary meaning. They move the reader to a perception of the subject apart from what they describe. But the writer who elects to let the facts speak for themselves has of necessity to forego this expressive value and concentrate his powers on exact description. Try as he will, however, he cannot get closer to the facts than the nature of language allows. Meanwhile, though he has discarded for his purpose the direct emotional action of words, it still goes on in the mind of the reader; but, in this case, without the coherence that follows its frank acceptance by the writer; like the paint in the Impressionist picture, the words get in the way of the subject and the reader gets anything but a true impression of the scene. If he gets anything more than

a catalogue of the facts, forgotten before the end of the description is reached, he gets a distorted idea of their significance—which accounts for the unrelieved gloom of many of Zola's pages.

When the realistic method is applied to dialogue the results are even more disastrous—from the point of view of truth. A great part of actual conversation is carried on in inarticulate or semi-articulate noises; and the writer's only safe alternative to imitative symbols is free translation. This, in his puritanical insistence on objective truth, the realistic writer avoids; with the result that his dialogue is much balder than it would be in actual life. One amusing result, when the subject is one to attract the notice of censors, is that the realistic writer is of all others condemned to euphemisms. In certain poems by Mr. John Masefield the word "bloody" is by constant reiteration reduced to the ineffectiveness of the curate's "Good gracious!" because the reader cannot but feel that it is only a euphemism for something stronger.

So far I have purposely avoided any reference to "style," because style is really implicit in the nature of words. Their expressive use demands a certain order and rhythm, irrespective of what they actually mean in the dictionary sense of the word; and very often, like the inflection of the voice in speaking, the order and rhythm will convey much more than the words themselves. You cannot have anything that can be called "style" on the purely descriptive basis of words; and the only reason why Zola's style is not uniformly bad is that, more often than he was aware, his instinct as a writer got the better of his theory as a

realist. There are many passages in his works where, in spite of his worst efforts, he rises to expression and gives you a memorable picture of life. He forgets to be accurate, and the result is that he is truthful.

Allowing for the difference between words and paint, these remarks about the medium apply equally well to painting. Design in painting corresponds pretty closely to style in literature—in so far as style is a matter of the order and rhythm of words—in its effect upon the mind. Whether you call its elements " rhythmical drawing " or " significant form " it acts directly, without reference to the subject described. In the one case as in the other a purely descriptive use of the medium, such as is demanded by the theory of Impressionism, not only denies the artist this short cut to attention, but denies expression to the medium itself. Apart from every other consideration, there seems to be something in the human mind which demands in all forms of art the record of a gesture ; and it is obvious that in proportion as you set out to let the facts speak for themselves your gesture in the medium will be cramped. The mere existence of a medium, in fact, prohibits the exact representation of nature.

Whether or not the Impressionist painters were directly influenced by Zola, he undoubtedly exposes the heresy enshrined in the theory of the movement. But here it must be said plainly that the Impressionist painters as a body were much less heretical in practice than they were in theory. To put it another way, they were too good painters to be very consistent Impressionists. I am not sure that the fairest description of Impressionism would not be a movement in which the

talents of certain painters were hindered by undue respect for the evidence of optical vision ; which undue respect was the reflection in painting of the prevailing heresy of the nineteenth century.

In many respects Edouard Manet (1832-1883) was the most interesting of the Impressionists. He seems to have been the strongest personality of the group, but, possibly for that reason, he was the most traditional in practice as compared with painters who had gone before, notably those of the Spanish School. The influences of both Velasquez and Goya are to be found in his work. Partly, no doubt, because he was mainly a figure painter he takes his place among the Old Masters much more comfortably than any other of the Impressionists. When the fragment of his " Execution of the Emperor Maximilian " was hung in the National Gallery it seemed incredible that he could ever have been called a revolutionary.

Not only was Manet the most traditional of the group, but, though he died in 1883, it is in his works that the first signs of the coming reaction from Impressionism are to be perceived. He, indeed, may be said to have seen further than his contemporaries ; both backwards and forwards. He shared in, if he did not lead, the positive advance that was made by Impressionism, but he escaped its heretical tendencies. In this respect he is a striking illustration of a truth that was brought out by Mr. Wyndham Lewis in his lecture on Modern Movements in Painting at the Central Hall, Westminster, in 1919 : that the real history of painting is only to be read in the works of the greater painters. They are, so to speak, central in

the tradition. With all their differences they have a certain affinity; they carry the subject on but keep it continuous; they follow the general stream of human development, and so express their own periods, but they remain compatible one with the other—as humanity through all its changes of opinion remains compatible with itself. It is when you begin to explore "movements," and descend among the rank and file that you are struck by contradictions. If our knowledge of art were limited to masterpieces we should find a perfectly harmonious development from the earliest ages down to the present day.

Reduced to its essentials, the particular advance that Manet made in the art of painting was in the science of values; the notation of tones by which the apparent position of an object in space is determined. Leaving out all question of relative greatness, comparison of his work with that of Velazquez is illuminating. The modern painter puts much more of the onus of truth upon values. The drawing, though still correct in its implications, is relaxed, and the patches of tone themselves are greatly simplified and laid side by side to build up the subject by their relations of lightness or darkness rather than by the definition of their edges. Manet, in fact, had observed the constructive power of correct intonation; that if the values are true the drawing may be left to take care of itself; a truth that the reader may observe in looking over the "process" reproductions of wash drawings in any popular magazine. There is something in this method of painting by values that reminds one of good cabinet-making; you feel that the patches will keep their places without being glued or tacked down.

With all this broadening and simplification of method the treatment of the subject by Manet is still Naturalistic, but not priggishly so. The tendency in his work is always to sweep the contours into a rhythmical composition; to employ so far as is compatible with Naturalistic truth the direct action of design. In this respect his work may be called "decorative," for all its actuality of subject; and it resembles the work of Rembrandt at least in so far as the employment of light and shade for emotional ends as well as for realistic illusion is concerned. In the last analysis, what kept Manet from the heretical tendencies of Impressionism was his loyalty to the medium. He was before everything a painter; and in any question between the fact and the free handling of paint it was the fact and not the medium that was sacrificed.

In certain of his works, too, notably in the "Olympia," in the Louvre, there is a tendency that foreshadows one of the expedients of Post-Impressionism; a tendency to drive the shadows to the edges of lighted objects, so that they appear as a line. In Manet's pictures this effect can always be "explained" by the lighting; but it is only a step from this to the arbitrary employment of an outline, such as we see in the works of Gauguin and Matisse. Manet, in fact, seems often to have been in two minds whether to stick to the visual impression or whether to throw it over in favour of a mental conception expressed in terms of painting, without regard to the evidence of the eye as an optical instrument. It is not necessary to assume that he "reasoned it out"; his loyalty to paint would lead him in that direction.

With progress in open-air painting Manet lightened his key, loosened his handling, and translated his tone-values into colour-values ; but he never lost his feeling for rhythmical composition or broke up the broad fluency of his touch. Such illumination as he got was got by synthesis and not by analysis ; by broadening the planes rather than by separating the constituents of their general tone. Whether he painted in a high or a low key, he was always " in the middle of the note," and the atmospheric truth of his work resulted from this purity of intonation. Zola undoubtedly influenced him in choice of subjects, but there is no trace of doctrinaire influence in their treatment. The general impression to be got from his work is that of a painter who, in his closest approach to the real aspects of nature, was guided by the conditions of his art and not by any abstract theory of representation.

With Claude Monet (1840-) the influence of theory is more evident, though it is not so pronounced as to involve the adoption of a recipe or formula. The particular aspect of nature that appeals to him most strongly is that of conditions, above all, conditions of light. Solid objects interest him less for their own sakes than as subject to the light which falls upon and surrounds them. If Manet may be said to have sought for truth of illumination in the exact intonation and nice adjustment of values in the objects themselves, Monet may be said to seek the truth of objects in the treatment of light itself. Manet may be supposed to have said : " Be true to objects, and you will be true to the light which falls upon them " ; Monet to say : " Be true to light, and you will be true to the objects

which it illuminates." He attacks the problems of light directly.

It follows that subject in his pictures is a secondary consideration so far as what are called the " features " of a landscape are concerned. Light itself is the subject. In this apotheosis of light he was undoubtedly inspired, if not influenced, by Turner ; whose works he saw on a visit to London with Camille Pissarro during the siege of Paris (1870-71). The inspiration, however, must have been purely technical, since he shows nothing of Turner's romantic flights in colour or use of rhetoric, as it may be called, in design. It is not the drama but the narrative of light that Monet pursues. M. Bénédite calls him " the poet of the hour, which he delicately renders with infinite variety." If " poet " is used here to mean one acutely sensitive to the beauty of the hour and capable of revealing it, the word is true enough ; but, unlike Turner, Monet is essentially a prose as distinguished from a verse painter. His mastery of the fine shades of light might very well be compared to the mastery of the fine shades of temperament in the writings of the late Mr. Henry James. Better still might Monet be compared to the composer Debussey. So far as the productions of one art can parallel those of another, *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un Faune* is the equivalent in music of a picture or series of pictures by Monet. Rhythms are present in both, but they are too subtle and indefinite to seize the attention ; and what remains in the memory is a shimmer and a glow. Ignoring the means, and the theory of their employment, and thinking only of the emotional result, Claude Monet and Claude Debussey may be said

to have reached the furthest limits yet of Impressionism in their respective arts.

The subject of Monet's chief pre-occupation is clearly shown by the various " series " of his paintings; cathedrals—such as the front of Rouen, in the Luxembourg Museum;—poplars, views of the Thames; and water-lilies— like the example shown in the exhibition of the " Monarro Group " at the Goupil Gallery in February, 1920. In these pictures he follows the change of light throughout the day and at different seasons of the year. With this pre-occupation one would not expect any great attention to design so far as the treatment of form is concerned; but it would not be correct to say that Monet is not a designer. He designs in conditions; substituting for the rhythm and balance of form the rhythm and balance of light and colour. Though it is true that in his efforts to realise conditions of light Monet makes use of broken colour, he does not carry the method so far as the scientific theory of " divisionism " or *pointillisme*. His use of it is rather instinctive, as it was employed by Delacroix, Constable and still earlier painters. Wherein he differs from them, mainly, is in the lightness of key, so that broken colour produces the effect of iridescence.

Camille Pissarro (1831-1903) went further. At any rate for a time he experimented with " divisionism " on scientific principles. " Divisionism," by the way, is a better general term for the method than *pointillisme*; because the latter is only applicable when the touches of unmixed pigment take the form of dots. The theory of divisionism in painting was based upon an observation of Georges Seurat's in reading an

account of certain optical experiments by Professor Rood of Columbia University. The following account is taken from "The Story of French Painting,"* by Mr. Charles H. Caffin :

"The latter (Professor Rood) recorded an experiment made with a comparison of revolving disks, on one of which two colours were painted in separate sections, while the other was covered with the product of the same two colours, previously mixed on the palette. The revolution of the former disk produced a mingling of the colours far more intense and lively than the hue of the other one. It seemed to establish the superiority, for the purposes of brilliance and intensity, of the optical blending to the actual blending on the palette. Seurat took the hint and communicated the results to Monet and Pissarro. Henceforth their work becomes distinguished by division of touch. They lay the pure colours side by side and depend upon the eye to effect the mingling."

As we saw, Monet does not seem to have paid much attention to the theoretical aspect of divisionism, and Pissarro soon abandoned its extreme application for a broader method of broken colour akin to that of Monet ; but since he was the most important of the Impressionist painters to adopt the formula he may be looked upon as its god-father. Particularly since the most logical and consistent application of the theory, for purely optical purposes, is practised by his talented son, Mr. Lucien Pissarro.

It will be observed that the use of divisionism and similar expedients by the Impressionists was entirely

* The Story of French Painting. By Charles H. Caffin. (Fisher Unwin).

practical. It had no æsthetic function. The increased brilliance and intensity of colour secured by optical blending, instead of blending on the palette, was not aimed at decoration, but only at the more perfect realisation of effects of light. It was a refinement of Realism supported, apparently, by scientific theory. I say " apparently " because there are obvious fallacies in its direct application to painting. To begin with, pigment, particularly oil pigment, is not light ; and in order to produce the effect of light with pigment the theory must be modified out of all knowledge in practice. Even then it is doubtful if the emotional as distinct from the optical effect of luminosity in an Impressionist painting is greater than it is in a picture by Claude or Turner in which the effect is produced by conventional means. The whole subject of division-ism, in fact, is a good instance of what I called the prevailing heresy of the nineteenth century : the tendency to reason from the facts of nature in sublime confidence that the repetition of the facts in art will produce the effect of truth in the human mind. I do not mean that painters gained nothing from the analysis of light ; at any rate, it improved their colour and encouraged them to paint in higher keys ; but that these æsthetic advantages were only incidental to their theory of truth. As we shall see in dealing with what has been called "Neo-Impressionism," the incidental advantages were carried over into what was in principle an inversion of Impressionist theory. They formed, in fact, one of the links between Impressionism and Post-Impressionism.

CHAPTER V

IMPRESSIONISM IN FRANCE (*concluded*)

BUT, before leaving Impressionism in France, we must glance at several other painters connected with the movement in practice if not in theory. So far as choice of subject is concerned, none of the Impressionist painters, not even Manet, showed more clearly the influence of Zola than Degas. If he did not share Zola's theory of truth in artistic method, he shared to the full his theory of truth to life by the selection of certain aspects of humanity. Hilaire Germain Edgar Degas was born in 1834, and died in 1917. He was a more accomplished draughtsman than most of the group, and, at any rate in pattern, a first-rate designer. It is customary to attribute his practice in this respect, as that of several of the other Impressionists, notably Whistler, to the influence of the Japanese; but the claim needs some qualification. What Degas and his like borrowed from the Japanese was the system of designing by the balance of light and dark in an apparently fortuitous arrangement. Or, rather, they adopted the accidents of the system. In principle the Impressionists and the Japanese—and all other Eastern artists—are directly opposed; because in a Japanese design, even in the *Ukiyoyé* or popular colour-prints which came under the notice of Degas, the balance of light and dark is connected

with a rhythmical and extremely formal system of drawing. Naturalistic in subject, a Japanese colour-print is the reverse of Naturalistic in method. Objective truth by the visual standard, which the Impressionists swore by, is entirely disregarded, and there is no attempt at any but a decorative notation of values.

There is, indeed, no more significant evidence of the æsthetic weakness of Impressionism than the instinctive denial of its principles implied in the accepted influence of Japanese design. With reference to artistic belief it can only be compared to the action of a man who, having reasoned himself out of religion, still goes to church on Sunday in order to get the benefit of the doubt. No matter how "accidental" an Impressionist arrangement may look, it is to the extent of arrangement untrue to nature from the Impressionist point of view. But the poison worked, and the principles as distinct from the accidents of Japanese—or at any rate Oriental—design undoubtedly played a part in the reaction from Impressionism.

Degas is better known in this country than any of the other Impressionists by reason of his characteristic subjects: ballet-girls, washerwomen, toilet and racing scenes, and the life of the *demi-monde*. They are drawn with extraordinary vigour and feeling for movement, and their composition is all the more effective and memorable from its unexpectedness. Their colour, particularly in effects of artificial light, and in pastel, is often magical; so that in looking at them you become conscious of a struggle in the artist between his feeling for the medium and his theory of truth. More than any other of the Impressionist painters he resembles

Zola in associating Realism in the popular mind with particular aspects of life—as if a ballet-girl were more real than a duchess or a district-visitor. As a reading of life his work is as fantastically untrue as that of Zola. The impression produced is not that of freedom from prejudice but of inverted sentimentality. In looking at studies of women at their toilet by Degas you are conscious, not so much of the ugliness of the models as of the infinity of pains the artist must have taken to find them. They represent anything but a fair average of bodily imperfection. Rightly or wrongly you put them down to not sincerity but misogyny.

With Auguste Renoir (1841-1919) on the other hand, you are struck most of all by the fulness and freedom of the artist's acceptance of life. The most unequal, Renoir was also the most unprejudiced of all the Impressionists. Better than anybody he deserves to be called the instinctive artist of the movement. Café and ballroom scenes, landscapes, flowers, fruit, women and children, he delighted in them all and expressed his delight with the frank enthusiasm of a child. His use of the technical expedients of Impressionism was purely æsthetic; but, though in this sense he was the least theoretical of the group, he was perhaps the most typical in the sense of recording his personal, immediate and single impression.

Several other Impressionists may be noted in passing; Alfred Sisley, who held a place somewhere between Monet and Camille Pissarro; Berthe Morisot, who was Manet's sister-in-law, and the American Mary Cassatt; but with all their variety of individual talent they do not illustrate any new principle or method in

painting that is not covered by one or other of the painters described above.

When all the merits of French Impressionism are taken into account, what is it that strikes you most about the movement? I think it can best be described by the word limitation. That which was to give increased freedom to the painter only succeeded in narrowing his range in both subject and style. If, disregarding all purely æsthetic considerations, you took the body of Impressionist painting as a complete interpretation of contemporary life, you would be forced to conclude that it was a very limited life indeed. On the human side it was almost exclusively urban; an affair of cafés, theatres, race-courses and wash-houses, with the back-bedroom or the plutocratic salon for relief; and, so far as the return to nature was expressed in landscape, it did not seem to go beyond the environs of Paris. The Barbizon landscape, though in fact limited to the Forest of Fontainebleau, was positively cosmical in comparison.

If, on the other hand, you disregard the question of subject and turn to that of artistic motive, you find Impressionism equally limited. Effects of light and atmosphere pretty well describes its whole range. Impressionism, in fact, was a form of intensive culture, with the merits and the defects of such arbitrary limitations of human activity. Granting that it allowed for all the refinements of individual vision, the artistic field was limited to the visual impression. If this had been instinctive we might have enjoyed the advantages without becoming aware the exclusions; because the narrowest truth pursued without prejudice contains

by implication all other forms of truth ; it is merely that the individual does not bother about them ; but it is impossible to resist the feeling that the narrowing of the artistic field by the Impressionists was deliberate. It was not that they took other forms of truth for granted, but that they protested against any form of truth that would not pass the test of the eyes as optical instruments. To them more than to anybody else is due the heresy of the " artistic eye." Turner's answer " Don't you wish you could, Ma'am ! " to the lady who said she didn't see colours like that in nature, was not a claim to the artistic eye, but to the artistic imagination. But the Impressionists claimed that the eye itself could be educated to see as they saw—as it undoubtedly could at a sacrifice. The sacrifice is of all that appreciation of life and nature, part memory, part association, part who knows what of common human heritage, which goes on behind the eye ; an appreciation in which the eye is the channel and not the critic of reality. The consequence is that in looking at the works of the Impressionists we are, on the whole, more conscious of what is sacrificed than of what is retained ; though we may agree that what is retained is intensely realised.

In its wider bearings Impressionism is a good example of what Matthew Arnold called " the dissidence of dissent " ; the tendency of all conscious pursuit of truth to harden into intolerance. Of all forms of art it strikes you as the most professional in the sense of making a distinction between the ordinary person and the educated artist. Other forms of art leave room for many degrees of cultivated appreciation, but you have

to learn how to look at Impressionist pictures to begin with. In a collection of Old Masters, such as the National Gallery, you feel a proper humility, as in the presence of your moral and intellectual superiors, but at any rate you feel at home; your artistic ignorance is indulged by a dozen appeals to your sense of beauty and your general susceptibilities as a human being; but a roomful of Impressionist paintings produces an effect that can only be described as that of inhospitality. "Understand or get out" might be written over the doorway.

When one remembers that the social creed of the Impressionists, of the Realists in general, was pre-eminently democratic, this effect can only be called ironical. It is the inevitable result of basing art too exclusively on a highly specialised function of the eyes. There is nothing in ordinary life that corresponds to it; leaving out scientific theories, such as that of divisionism, the mere detachment from sentiments and associations necessary to the full appreciation of an Impressionist painting involves a considerable effort. If not "cheerfulness" at any rate everyday experience "will keep creeping in." So long as art is regarded mainly as a specialised exercise of the hand, leaving the function of the eyes to be taken for granted, there is not this difficulty of approach for the ordinary person; because the simplest use of tools or implements is an introduction to the highest refinements of craftsmanship. The difference is only one of degree; but the difference of vision implied in Impressionism is one of kind. You have to use your eyes differently from the way you use them for anything else. It is

biassed vision in the most extreme sense of the words.

All this, as I have tried to show, was part and parcel of the general tendency of the nineteenth century. The solemnity of belief was exchanged for the solemnity of the facts. It was the age of the so-called practical man, in all his perversions, from the captain of industry to the scientific expert. Impressionism, in short, was nothing but the scientific materialism of the nineteenth century carried to its logical conclusion in the art of painting. Its freedom was illusory, because the authority of tradition is never so exclusive as the authority of a sect.

CHAPTER VI

IMPRESSIONISM OUTSIDE FRANCE

So far we have only considered Impressionism in France. Its development in other countries, where it can be traced, was broader and less theoretical. There is something in its very nature that needs the logical French mind for consistent application; and comparison of the turns given to the movement in different countries would throw an interesting light on the question of nationality in art.

The Impressionism of Holland may be described as a modification of the domesticated romantic Naturalism of the Barbizon group of French painters. Johan Barthold Jongkind (1819-1891) was a link not only between Holland and France, where he spent a great part of his life, but between the Barbizon painters and the Impressionists themselves. He was a friend of Corot, Daubigny and Rousseau, and also of Monet; and the influence, at any rate between him and Daubigny and Monet, was mutual. His pictures combine some of the characteristics of the two groups; the poetical composition of the Barbizon painters and the vibrating light of the Impressionists.

The place of Josef Israels among the Impressionists may be questioned, though his treatment of light would seem to relate him to them; but when we come to the brothers Maris and Anton Mauve—not to speak

of their friend and patron, Hendrik Willem Mesdag—the influence is definite.

Of the three brothers Maris, the second in age, Matthew, or "Thys" (1839-1917), was by far the most important. For a good many years before his death he lived in England, and his intensely subjective art had affinities with the mystical side of the Pre-Raphaelite movement. In a sense he may be said to have combined, more successfully than any English painter, the apparently irreconcilable aims of the Pre-Raphaelites and the Impressionists. That is to say, he applied the atmospheric refinements of the latter to imaginative compositions in which the facts of nature are seen subjectively. In this peculiar combination of Realism and Romance he strongly resembled the Belgian writer, Maurice Maeterlinck. His "Girl Watching the Fowls Feed" might very well be an illustration to one of Maeterlinck's dramas.

Jacob, or "James" Maris (1837-1899), the eldest of the three brothers, was much more definitely a Naturalist; his broad rendering of the facts, resembling that of the Barbizon painters, being carried into a modified Impressionism in the treatment of light. It is interesting to observe that he was in the habit of painting from memory. This, while it stopped short of the imaginative recreation, or distillation, which distinguished his brother Matthew, kept him on the safe side of the extremely objective treatment of the facts which belonged to the French Impressionists. Vision, however Naturalistic, ceases to be purely optical the moment it is subjected to the qualifying influence of memory. The result is that the landscapes of Jacob

Maris, for all their truth of light and atmosphere, have a grandeur which is generally lacking in the works of the movement in France.

The most definitely " Impressionistic " of the three brothers was William, or " Willem " (1844-1910), the youngest. He was an animal as well as a landscape painter, but it is evident that solid objects interested him chiefly as responding to conditions of light. His pictures have a peculiar freshness, and no modern painter has excelled him in suggesting the flicker of light, the rustle of leaves and the plash of water. Less gifted as a designer, more than either of his brothers he seems to have trusted to the immediate evidence of his eyes.

Anton Mauve (1838-1888), on the other hand, who also introduced figures and animals into his landscapes, was much more akin to the Barbizon painters, particularly Corot, though without his classical turn. If we say that his Naturalism is distinguished by poetical feeling rather than by poetical invention we shall indicate the kind of difference under their similarities. In the same way, though touched with their influence, Mauve is distinguished from the French Impressionists by the fact that his pre-occupation with light, though close and delicate, is almost purely æsthetic. Conditions of light interested him for the sentiment they convey and not for the reality they establish.

Though it might be fantastic to suggest racial affinity as the reason, Impressionism in Belgium seems to have taken the logical turn associated with France, and to be concerned mainly with the theory of divisionism. At any rate, the works of Emil Claus (1849-),

Leon de Smet, and Theo van Rysselberghe (1862-) bear that character. The last is particularly interesting because his use of divisionism carries him into the phase of "Neo-Impressionism" which forms a link between Impressionism and Post-Impressionism. If he can be said to belong to any group, the extremely original Italian painter, Giovanni Segantini (1858-1899) was also Neo-Impressionistic rather than Impressionistic in his use of divisionism; the point being that the "touch" in his work has a decorative and expressive, as well as a realistic function. On the other hand, the Spanish painter, Joachim Sorolla y Bastida (1862-) represents the broader aspect of Impressionism associated with Manet.

But it is when we come to England that Impressionism takes on its broadest and least theoretical character. It is customary to credit Whistler with having introduced the movement into this country. He certainly brought the name and some of the formulas, but the thing itself already existed in direct development from Constable. What Whistler did was to make Impressionism in England conscious and deliberate.

The whole subject of painting in England is closely involved with the national character, and it is impossible to consider the one without making allowances for the other. English art, and this includes literature and music as well as painting, is and always has been, not only more subjective in the sense of reflecting the moods and sentiments of the artist than art on the Continent, but much more dominated by the subject itself. The nature of the person, thing or scene represented has always counted for more in proportion to

the treatment. Not only that, but, at any rate in painting, the national tendency to rule-of-thumb methods and "muddling through" is strongly pronounced. Less than anybody is the Englishman inclined to reduce his art to rules and principles. This, no doubt, is partly due to mental indolence, but still more to a genuine distrust of the doctrinaire.

To say that English painting tends to be "literary" is really to beg the question. Literary character has nothing whatever to do with the subjects, ideas or emotions associated with literature, but only with their expression in words. This ought to be obvious. Otherwise you would have to say that the detailed narrative of a novel was necessarily more literary than the suggested mood of a poem, which would be absurd. Whether a piece of writing is literary or not depends entirely on its due recognition of the value of words in their employment, on the use of the medium. Literary character, in fact, corresponds exactly to the character we call "painter-like" in a picture. A picture is not literary because it "tells a story," any more than a poem is painter-like because it gives you a vivid impression of a landscape. The story may or may not be told in a painter-like manner, and the landscape may or may not be conveyed in a literary manner; but the mere presence of the story or the landscape does not affect the question.

What it really amounts to is that in England both literature and painting are, as a rule, more closely involved with the subjects of their activities than they are elsewhere. Speaking generally, Continental art and literature, at any rate in Latin countries, are more

detached. But, in the interests of accuracy, it is necessary to understand what artistic detachment really means. It does not necessarily imply greater truth. Upon examination it means not so much that the artist is more detached from the subject of his art, and therefore able to see it more clearly and completely as a whole, as from his own sympathies with the subject. The line of detachment is not as between his observation and the subject, but as between his observation as a painter or writer and his sympathies as a human being. The results of his painting or writing may be more true to observation, but they are not necessarily more true in the larger human sense of the word. The probability is that they will be less true ; because he has looked at the subject with only a part of himself.

At the same time, one consequence of this detachment is that the artist is enabled to give more attention to treatment ; and, speaking generally, Continental painting and literature are not only more distinct one from the other than they are in England, but they are done in a more obviously workmanlike manner. I should hesitate to say that they are " better " done, because quality of workmanship depends on what you are trying to do. It is much easier to be workmanlike if you are dealing only with the results of your observation than if you are including the full complement of your reactions as a human being. " Muddling through" is not necessarily a sign of stupidity ; it may mean that you are hindered by a larger view of the facts and conditions. You see too many sides for arbitrary efficiency. There is an artistic moral in the surgeon's report: " The operation was completely successful, but the

patient unfortunately died." In many books and pictures the subject is killed in a workmanlike manner. I am not at all sure that the tendency to flounder in face of the subject is not in itself a proof of the superiority of English art and literature.

But whether it be a merit or a defect, it is undoubtedly the English way. This is important, because it bears on the whole question of artistic movements in England. They are, necessarily, much less logical and consistent than they are in France. As a rule, if an artistic, or, indeed, an intellectual, movement in England is logical and consistent there is something wrong with it. No doubt it is possible to attach too much importance to national differences; but there is no getting away from the fact that the whole texture of life is more logical and consistent in France than it is in England. Politics and social manners and customs, the marriage contract, for example, and the general attitude to sexual matters, all tell the same story. It would be a miracle if the same characteristics were not reflected in literature and art, in their methods as well as in their subjects. Speaking generally, the Englishman is a subjective and the Frenchman an objective animal. As a rule they are most satisfactory in art and literature when they behave accordingly. If the Frenchman tries to be subjective he is generally only sentimental; Zola's "Le Rêve" is a good instance; and if the Englishman tries to be objective he is generally bald.

There will be shrieks at this, I know, but it is both broadly true and immensely important in any consideration of art. The whole subject of modern movements in England is compromised by the fact that most of

them originated in France ; that is to say, in an entirely different emotional and intellectual atmosphere. When the French painter narrows his vision to observation of the facts he is, after all, only following the bent of his mind ; but when the English painter does it he is, in nine cases out of ten, suppressing his natural instincts ; and the consequence is that he loses considerably more than he gains. In any case Impressionism means exclusion ; but the Englishman excludes more than the Frenchman, because Impressionist methods are not congenial to his habit of mind. This applies to other arts than painting and to other things besides art. English attempts at the French novel are generally much more arid than their French models. Quite apart from the loss of native geniality involved in the Realistic method, the mere attempt to make English a language of precision destroys its vitality. A typical instance of the same kind of discrepancy outside art is the English attempt at the irregular domestic establishment. Even to-day it is seldom successful. Apart from any question of public opinion, it seldom conforms to the real wishes of both the persons immediately concerned. To one or the other, generally, though not always, the woman, it involves a moral discomfort that, so far as one can judge, is entirely absent from many such alliances on the Continent. They manage these things better in France, not because the French are less moral than we are, but because they regard the whole subject of sexual relationships more objectively.

When we talk about Impressionism in England we must distinguish between the native Impressionism, in direct descent from Constable, and the Impressionism

imported by Whistler—if he were the culprit. The former has a breadth and geniality that is wanting in the latter. It is hardly more than an instinctive and a rule-of-thumb feeling towards a "more and more analytic and objective" treatment of the facts of nature in keeping with the general tendency of the nineteenth century. Design becomes less formal, but the subject, though less detailed, remains as important as before in comparison with the treatment.

This fulness of subject is one of the most striking and persistent characteristics of English art and literature. There is nothing in French fiction that corresponds to the large, rambling plots of Dickens and Thackeray. Balzac, Victor Hugo and Zola all worked on a large canvas but with a definite thesis which, so to speak, placed the subject in a single light. Even when a more realistic method is adopted in English fiction, as in the work of Mr. Thomas Hardy, Mr. H. G. Wells and Mr. Arnold Bennett, the fulness of subject remains. It is the same in painting. The "subject picture," in the special sense of the words, may have declined, but English landscape still gives you a full budget of the facts. As compared with French landscape, it is the scatter-gun compared with the rifle. No matter how Impressionistic his aim, the native Impressionist "shoots into the brown." Even the Barbizon painters, with their comparatively broad reach, took smaller eyefuls than the contemporary English artists; and there is nothing in purely native landscape that corresponds to the poplars and haystacks of Monet.

Apart from its other merits, "Harlech Castle and surrounding landscape," by James Ward, R.A., in the

National Gallery, has always seemed to me to sum up the characteristics of English landscape painting. As indicating these characteristics the official description could hardly be bettered.

" On the brow of a hill in the foreground lies a large tree recently felled, to the left of which stands a woodman engaged in lopping off its branches. Behind are two peasant women binding fagots. To the right a cart laden with timber and drawn by four grey horses is turning the corner of a road ; some trees and half-hidden cottages separate this portion of the scene from the middle distance, in the centre of which rises Harlech Castle, surrounded by a large tract of meadow-land with hills in the background. Stormy sky, with the sun setting in the extreme left of the picture."

James Ward, of course, was roughly contemporary with Constable ; but though the subjects of English landscape have tended to simplify since his day, they are still on the full side. What it amounts to is that the English painter employs a larger number of motives than his French colleague. To say that they are not all pictorial motives is to confuse the issue. The difference is, rather, that they are not all such as appeal to the critical as distinct from the communicating faculty of the eyes. The attitude is less professional and more human. This is true even of the much-abused " subject picture." For all the " story " they contain, the subjects of Hogarth, Wilkie and Ford Madox Brown are purely pictorial, and the information about them is conveyed in a purely painter-like way. To say that Madox Brown is less painter-like than Manet, because he gives you more of the subject, is like saying that

Mr. Thomas Hardy is less literary than Zola because he deals in a wider range of human motives.

Nothing in art or literature happens without cause, and a little consideration shows that, leaving out mental differences in the artists, the subject matter of French and English art and literature is entirely different in character. Human passions are the same all the world over, but their expression is conditioned by local circumstances; and a social or domestic "situation" in England is more complex and less clearly defined than it is in France; because the very texture of society is more confused. English life in terms of the French novel is life artificially simplified. Exactly the same is true of landscape. There is nothing in France to compare with such subjects as "Harlech Castle," or "The Valley Farm," or "Crossing the Brook," or "The Market Cart," to name four typical landscapes of the British School. One has only to remember the typical landscape of France, the wide straight road with its bordering poplars, the flanking canal, and the flat, unfenced fields, to see that it almost reduces the painter to the study of atmospheric conditions for his effects. Apart from what they present to the eye, such scenes sink into the background of the mind, and determine the whole attitude of the artist to nature. In order to "paint like the Frenchmen" the English artist has to go out of his way and, necessarily, to become self-conscious. But there is no need to confine ourselves to the fine arts in order to see that the genuine productions of the two countries must differ. There are exactly similar differences between French and English cooking as between French and English painting.

CHAPTER VII

WHISTLER

I HAVE dwelt at length upon these differences because of their importance in the study of modern movements in England. Owing to increased freedom of inter-communication, and the general tendency of our young artists to study in Paris, towards the end of the nineteenth century English painting received what can only be called a pseudo-Gallic veneer. About 1880 the native Impressionism, which had descended from Constable through such painters as David Cox, William Müller, Buxton Knight, Cecil Lawson, James Charles and Charles Furse, to take a selection of names from the Tate Gallery Catalogue, was, so to speak, brought up standing by the apparition of James Abbott McNeil Whistler.

Until then artistic intercourse between England and France had resulted only in a friendly give and take. What characteristics each country borrowed from the other were digested into the native tradition, without affecting its general character. The influence of Constable upon the Barbizon painters, if not upon Monet, is a case in point; and for more modern instances of the same sort of influence on the other side we may look to the works of Mr. Frank Brangwyn, Mr. John Sargent, Mr. David Murray, Mr. George Clausen, and Mr. Arnesby Brown; the last two even making use of a modified "divisionism." These five painters are

only a few out of the number who illustrate the persistence of the native Impressionism as distinct from that imported by Whistler. In general attitude to nature, and character of subject, they are essentially English, though they have been touched with French influence. You have only to compare Mr. Brangwyn's treatment of Labour with that of the French Impressionists, or a portrait by Mr. Sargent with a portrait by Blanche, or Mr. Clausen's painting of trees against the light with a similar subject by Monet or Pissarro, to recognise the fundamental differences between them—though they may be pursuing similar methods.

But Whistler gave an entirely new turn to English Impressionism; and, because of the light it throws on the whole subject of modern movements in this country, it is worth while considering at some length what it was. When Whistler resigned the Presidency of the Royal Society of British Artists, in 1888, he is reported to have said that he "took away the art but left the British." The words were true in a different sense from that intended. Whistler stood for that impossible thing, a cosmopolitan art. Painting is a universal craft, but its application to life is of little account in the long run unless it is national in the sense of reflecting national character; and any art in the R.B.A. that was not British in that sense was better away on strictly artistic grounds. It will be objected that Whistler was a cosmopolitan. To be precise, he was an American. So, for the matter of that, is Mr. Sargent; but, without any obviously conscious effort, he takes his place in the British School as Whistler never did. It is more

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than probable, if you want to get down to the roots of the matter, that cosmopolitanism, as Whistler exhibited it and Mr. Sargent does not, is precisely the reason why their great country has not yet found national expression in painting.

One has only to remember Whistler's writing and speaking, as well as his works, to see that "cosmopolitanism" is only the, so to speak, geographical name for the philosophical defect of his art. It is art divorced from life and depending entirely upon culture. To Whistler more than anybody we owe the conception of the "artist" as a specialised person, apart from his craft, which has done so much to prejudice the whole character of modern art. "Art for art's sake" as a gospel is only respectable when it is applied to craftsmanship; when, indeed, it is only the artistic application of such precepts as "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might" and "Consider the lilies of the field." The moment it is applied to the attitude of the artist to life and nature it is a foolish heresy.

The effects of this heresy in the case of Whistler himself were not very serious, because he really was a cosmopolitan. He had no roots. But in so far as they proceed from his influence on other artists they have done a great deal of harm. There is all the difference in the world between having no roots and cutting yourself away from them. Let there be no mistake. Whistler was a fine artist, but his philosophy of art was not only unsound but uneasy. Otherwise he would not have needed to talk and write so much about it. He was the uneasiest creature that ever lived; always wriggling.

It is more than probable that his conception of the "artist" was prompted by consciousness of the artistic disadvantages of his cosmopolitanism. At any rate, no artist before or since has found it necessary to spend so many words on defining his position.

The truth is that, with all its peculiar charm, the art of Whistler was based upon a series of compromises and evasions. The French Impressionists pursued the theory of Realism to its logical conclusion, because it was congenial to the nature of their minds; Whistler, with his cosmopolitan mind, saw the conclusion and jibbed at it. His larger works, at any rate, are efforts to escape from the logic of Realism into a region of twilight and undertones. Lacking the imagination, or perhaps the courage, to translate the facts of nature boldly into terms of his medium, he waited for or invented conditions in which the facts would not be too obvious, and made them "decorative" by arrangements that were entirely lacking in the logic of design. To compare one of his paintings with the Japanese prints that inspired them is to be reminded of the child who made a garden by sticking full-blown flowers in the soil. A fair summary of his artistic gospel would be that nature is only tolerable "in the dusk with the light behind her."

But let us have the gospel in his own words, from his *Ten o'Clock*, printed in the Tate Gallery Catalogue as a sort of apology for "Old Battersea Bridge."

"The sun blares, the wind blows from the east, the sky is bereft of clouds, and without all is of iron. The windows of the Crystal Palace are seen from all points of London. The holiday-maker rejoices in

the glorious day, and the painter turns aside to shut his eyes.

* * * * * * *

The dignity of the snow-capped mountain is lost in distinctness, but the joy of the tourist is to recognise the traveller on the top. The desire to see, for the sake of seeing, is, with the mass, alone the one to be gratified, hence the delight in detail. And when the evening mist clothes the riverside with poetry, as with a veil, and the poor buildings lose themselves in the dim sky, and the tall chimneys become campanili, and the warehouses are palaces in the night, and the whole city hangs in the heavens, and fairlyand is before us—then the wayfarer hastens home ; the working man and the cultured one, the wise man and the one of pleasure, cease to understand, as they have ceased to see, and Nature, who, for once, has sung in tune, sings her exquisite song to the artist alone, her son and her master—her son in that he loves her, her master in that he knows her."

That may be the creed of the " æsthete," but it is not the creed of any artist with both feet on solid ground. But for Whistler's own practice it would be difficult at this time of day to believe that he was not " talking through his hat " to confuse the Philistines. With regard to nature, it is nothing but the " Kiss Mammy School " translated into landscape. Not, of course, that the painter may not, or should not, choose moods of nature sympathetic to him ; the heresy is in the implication that only such or similar moods and aspects as those described are suitable for painting. One reads the passage with the sort of superstitious

awe that one feels at seeing a person about to do something egregious ; and the " I don't believe it ! " of the man who saw a giraffe for the first time hovers on the lips.

Not a single sentence will bear reflection. Even the facts are fantastically untrue. Thus, the dignity of the snow-capped mountain is by no manner of means lost in distinctness ; nor is it lost when the distinctness is reproduced in art ; as anybody can see in any number of Japanese colour-prints. All that is necessary to preserve the dignity on the reduced scale is that the distinctness shall be translated into terms of the medium ; and in the hands of a capable artist it is done without thinking. Nor is it true that the desire to see " for the sake of seeing " is characteristic of " the mass " ; indeed, " For to observe and for to see, For to be'old this world so wide " is a comparatively rare aspiration ; and " delight in detail " may be a morbidly artistic passion. In his description of the riverside and the city by night Whistler has described the conditions that appeal to the commonest form of sentimentality. It is not the artist but the " working man and the cultured one, the wise man and the one of pleasure " who can admire tall chimneys and warehouses only when they become campanili and palaces in the night. There is a passage in *Hamlet* poking fun at this " very like a whale " propensity of the average Philistine. The artist looks rather for the essential chimney and the essential warehouse. Finally, though sweeping statements are to be avoided, it can be said with some confidence that, for the purposes of the painter, nature never sings quite in tune any more

than the blackbird sings in tune for the purposes of the musical composer.

It is easy to see the dilemma that betrayed Whistler into this extraordinary farrago. He could not bring himself to let go of the visual impression, but, at the same time, his instinct as a painter was always pulling him away from it. When the pull of the medium compelled him to let go, that is to say, in his little pastel drawings on brown paper, he was pure artist. What he lacked in oil painting was the courage of his convictions as a Realist on the one hand, and the courage of his instincts as a painter on the other. He could not go to the logical extreme of the Frenchmen, and he would not go to the single-minded extreme of the Englishmen in which vision is taken for granted and the medium decides the treatment according to the skill of the individual. He became a sort of artistic Tomlinson, *a Dio spiacenti ed a nemici sui*, disloyal to the facts and disloyal to the medium. As compared with Manet, he was a sentimentalist, and as compared with a painter like Morland he cannot be said to have *used* oil paint at all. With regard to the actual substance of oil paint his works in this medium are paintings in *falsetto*. There is a sort of melodious crooning on the surface, but the real voice of the medium is not employed.

In looking at the larger works of Whistler, such as "Portrait of Whistler's Mother," in the Luxembourg Museum, "Thomas Carlyle," at Glasgow, and "Miss Alexander," it is difficult to resist the conclusion that the convention in which they are painted is really that of doctored photography. The basis is purely optical,

but the image is compromised by the treatment of simplified tone and subordinated detail. There is modification but no real translation. As if to confirm this conclusion, " Whistlerian effects " in portraiture are the peculiar province of the bad photographer. Lacking the Realistic " bite " of Pre-Raphaelite portraits these pictures lack also the organic articulation of the Japanese works by which they were partly inspired. The borrowing is purely eclectic. The " arrangement " is there, but not the underlying principle of design ; the basis of Japanese design being non-optical in character.

What merits these pictures have, and they have great merits, are in spite of and not because of the convention in which they are painted. Whistler, in fact, was a genuine artist involved in a thoroughly bad philosophy of art. It affected even the human spirit in which the portraits were painted. Thus, though it is true that the " Mother " has love, tenderness and even reverence, the artistic attitude of the painter has given them a self-conscious edge ; so that the sentiment conveyed has a disagreeable effect of " superiority." It is, indeed, dangerously like the sentiment satirized by the brilliant author of *Elizabeth and her German Garden* in her recent novel *Christopher and Columbus*, in describing the relations between " Mr. Twist " and his mother. One feels that if Whistler could have only dropped the " artist " we should have had much more sympathy with the affection of the son. It is not that the picture is too artistic ; nobody can devote too much art to the representation of the person he loves ; but that it is artistic in a belief that separates the

feelings of the artist from the feelings of ordinary humanity.

It is extremely difficult in pointing out the flaws in a man's artistic philosophy to escape from seeming to disparage his work. Like most of us, Whistler was much better than his theories. So far as his false conception of the artist would allow him, he was a devoted craftsman; sparing himself no pains to master the medium. When the medium itself got the upper hand of his theories, as in his etchings, lithographs and pastel drawings, he left nothing to be desired. Modification passes into real translation, and what in the oil paintings is graceful evasion of the logic of Realism is there an economy dictated by the nature of the means. Now and then, too, in his oil paintings, particularly in small works like "The Little White Girl" and some of the "Nocturnes," he escaped from his philosophy of art into art itself. He ceased to be the self-conscious "artist" and became the painter in the full sense of the word, with all the pooling of human faculties in the handling of paint implied.

Moreover, when all is said—Whistler was an American. It is no injustice to the inhabitants of the United States to say that cosmopolitanism has its disadvantages in art. It weakens conviction where it is most needed. M. Bénédite says: "Whistler was a Frenchman by education, by his tastes, and by the influence of the two great old masters under whom he came in turns: Rembrandt and Velasquez, who were the two great demi-gods of the realistic school." It would be truer to say that Whistler was a Frenchman by election; and the defects of his

art may be put down to the difference between election and birth. Lacking the courage of his convictions as a Realist, he invented the " artist " to explain and excuse the evasions of nature to which he was prompted by his instinct as a painter. With a little more faith in his instinct he would have been content to accept the common sentiments of humanity; and then the evasions would not have been necessary.

CHAPTER VIII

IMPRESSIONISM AND PRE-RAPHAELITISM

WHAT in Whistler was explained, if not excused, by his cosmopolitanism and largely redeemed by his genius had not the same justification in his followers ; and imported as distinct from native Impressionism was a doubtful blessing to British art. The mischief was negative rather than positive : loss of geniality caused by the deliberate exclusion of subject interest. In its effects it might be compared to false asceticism, which leaves the subject poorer instead of richer for renunciation. It is one thing for a Frenchman to limit himself to objective truth ; his mind works that way ; but when the average Englishman does the same thing he closes most of his channels of communication, if not of understanding.

On human grounds the worst consequence of Whistler's influence was to make painting in England much more narrowly professional than it had ever been before. This anti-social character is best appreciated by comparing Impressionism with the slightly earlier Pre-Raphaelite movement. This, with all its defects by absolute standards of painting, was a genuinely native growth. Its so-called " literary " character was merely the excess of the native tendency to rely upon subject interest. The hostility to it was Academic rather than popular ; a belated kick from the Classical tradition of the eighteenth century. The kind of truth

to nature attempted by the Pre-Raphaelites brought them into conflict with the view of art expressed in the *Discourses* of Reynolds; a view that was based almost exclusively upon the practice of Post-Raphaelite painters and their Classical ancestors in sculpture. That this view was also hostile to Impressionism did not make it any more sympathetic to the Pre-Raphaelites.

The kind of truth to nature attempted by the Pre-Raphaelites might seem strange to the ordinary person, but only on account of the degree to which it was attempted. There was nothing in it that he could not understand. It was essentially non-optical. This is important, because it is common to hear people talk about the "photographic Realism of the Pre-Raphaelites." Nothing could have been less photographic in principle. It only resembled photography in presenting a lot of detail. The detail was presented in an entirely different way. The Realism of the Impressionists, on the other hand, *was* photographic in principle, though it evaded the photographic consequence by suppressing detail. Nothing done by hand can ever be quite the same as a thing done by machinery; because, in spite of the worst efforts of the doer, the hand will have its say in the matter; but, so far as principle is concerned, photography made Impressionism a blind-alley occupation, while it left Pre-Raphaelitism absolutely unchallenged. There was no extremity of detail to which the Pre-Raphaelite painter could not go without for a moment coming into competition with photography; but the Impressionist could only evade photography by insisting upon the selective capacity of the "artistic eye."

IMPRESSIONISM AND PRE-RAPHAELITISM

For the sake of argument it may be said that both Impressionism and Pre-Raphaelitism are heresies. The heresy of Impressionism is excessive regard for the look of things; the heresy of Pre-Raphaelitism is excessive regard for things as they are known to be.

If you read between the lines of Ruskin's definition of Pre-Raphaelitism in the Lecture delivered at Edinburgh on November 18th, 1853, you will find this heresy admitted.

"*Pre-Raphaelitism* has but one principle, that of uncompromising truth in all that it does, obtained by working everything, down to the most minute detail, from nature and from nature only. Or, where imagination is necessarily trusted to, by always endeavouring to conceive a fact as it really was likely to have happened, rather than as it most prettily *might* have happened. Every *pre-Raphaelite* landscape background is painted to the last touch, in the open air, from the thing itself. Every *pre-Raphaelite* figure, however studied in expression, is a true portrait of some living person. Every minute accessory is painted in the same manner. . . . This is the main *pre-Raphaelite* principle."

The italics are Ruskin's. At a first glance this passage might read like a claim to optical truth in the works of the Pre-Raphaelites; but reflection shows that it is not; it is a claim to truth to things as they are known or believed to be. To take only one point—a landscape "painted to the last touch, in the open air, from the thing itself" could not, unless by a miracle of weather, be true to the look of things. Apart from the question of changing light there is that of changing focus. But,

indeed, the claim to optical truth was alien to all Ruskin's ideas about art. In his lecture on "Turner and his Works," delivered at Edinburgh on November 15th, 1853, he expressly condemns the substitution of truth of effect for truth of knowledge or belief; and you have only to look at the works of the Pre-Raphaelite painters to see that they entirely disregarded the optical truth that the Impressionists insisted upon. "The Blind Girl," by Millais, is a good example. The landscape detail is painted with extraordinary truth, in one sense, but not as it could possibly be seen by anybody looking at the girl.

The Pre-Raphaelites only required the ordinary person to use his eyes more faithfully than he was in the habit of using them, or than he was required to use them by the conventional art of the period; the Impressionists required him to use them in a different way altogether; to detach his vision from his experience. One was a moral claim involving a fuller consent of the individual, and the other was an intellectual claim involving dissent from some of his familiar means of perception. Both may be called heresies, because neither moral nor intellectual claims are valid in art, but there can be no question which was more likely to be disconcerting to the layman, particularly the English layman.

But, apart from all questions of truth to nature or methods of representation, the Pre-Raphaelites had a great advantage over the Impressionists in the character of their subjects. If they did not actually "tell a story" they, at any rate, illustrated a theme or an incident with all the point and circumstance that appeal

to the simple intelligence. Whether the theme or incident was taken from contemporary life, as Madox Brown's "Work," or from history, like the same painter's "Chaucer at the Court of Edward III," or from familiar literature, sacred or otherwise, like innumerable works by Madox Brown, Millais, Rossetti, and Holman Hunt, or even from legend, in the manner of Burne-Jones, made little difference. The subject was there, full of interest in itself and easy to read, even though the treatment might need some explanation.

What it amounts to is that the Pre-Raphaelite movement was essentially democratic, while Impressionism, in its imported form, was essentially aristocratic, at any rate intellectually, in the sense of requiring a special attitude to nature for its appreciation. It required the Englishman to look at nature like a Frenchman, but with none of his mental equipment. If you really get to the bottom of things, in the human sense Pre-Raphaelitism in England was a much nearer equivalent to Impressionism in France than was the Impressionism imported by Whistler. Pre-Raphaelitism in England and Impressionism in France represented the forms of Realism best adapted to the minds of the respective countries. If any evidence of this were needed it would be found in the fact that in each country the movement named was in close correspondence with the social and moral aspirations of the period. True to the character of each, the connection in France was mainly political, while in England it was rather moral and industrial—as exemplified in the arts and crafts activities of Morris and Burne-Jones. Madox Brown's "Work," with its deliberate introduction of the figure of Carlyle,

is a significant comment on the character of the contemporary Labour movement in England.

Impressionism as introduced by Whistler had no such basis in the life and habits of the people. It was a purely æsthetic movement. The quarrel between Ruskin and Whistler, culminating in the libel action of 1878, over the " pot of paint flung in the public face," as Ruskin had described one of Whistler's nocturnes at the Grosvenor Gallery, was something more than a difference about methods of painting. It was a difference about the very nature of the subject of art. There were misunderstandings on both sides, and, on the legal aspect, Whistler was undoubtedly entitled to his verdict ; but on broadly human grounds Ruskin was right and Whistler was wrong. Whistler has been described as having vindicated the purely artistic side of art. That is not strictly true. What he stood out for was the moral detachment of the artist ; for the gospel of " Art for art's sake " in relation to life instead of only in relation to craftsmanship. He stood out for something which might be true in France, where the moral detachment of the artist is a genuine habit of mind, but was certainly not true in England. Nor was it true of Whistler himself, or he would not have found it necessary to spend so many words in claiming it. As Ruskin maintained, though in unfortunately chosen language, Whistler's art *was* unsound because it involved a self-conscious attitude to life and nature.

Ruskin is often described as a man who talked nonsense about art, but talked it beautifully. Exactly the reverse is true. Everything he said about art was sound at bottom, but it was often obscured by his

manner of saying it. He needs interpretation. At this time of day it is possible to recognise that what Ruskin stood for was a conception of art which involves what, with reference to marriage, Roman Catholics call "moral consent"; a pooling of all the faculties, moral intellectual and emotional, in the act concerned. So long as any sense or sensibility of the individual is excluded it is not art in the true and full sense of the word. Art, in fact, involves the complete self-surrender, the waste, so to speak, that is parabled in the Magdalen's alabaster box of ointment. One has only to think it over to see that Ruskin's conception is much more truly "Art for art's sake" than Whistler's; because craftsmanship and not artistic attitude is the point at which the whole individual is poured out.

It may be said that, in a book dealing with modern movements, reference to these old quarrels is superfluous. That is to take a shallow view of the subject. The art of painting is continuous, and its most recent developments can only be understood with reference to what has gone before. M. Bénédite, writing in 1910, calls Pre-Raphaelitism "an isolated phenomenon." That judgment has been amusingly falsified, because the national characteristics expressed in Pre-Raphaelitism have persisted even into Post-Impressionism in this country, and given it a special turn. Not only that, but the dispute between Ruskin and Whistler throws light upon the very origin of Post-Impressionism in all countries by helping to expose the philosophical weakness at the heart of Impressionism. With reference to the art of the past, M. Bénédite's judgment can only be put down to lack of intimate acquaintance

with English life and character, of which Pre-Raphaelitism is a peculiarly direct expression. He admits that it is " one of the most instructive episodes in the history of contemporary art." It is instructive for that very reason.

Though it lacked the temperamental backing possessed by Pre-Raphaelitism, the imported Impressionism has produced some good painters in England. Or, rather, it has not spoilt them so much as one would expect who did not remember that painting has a vitality of its own, and that the good craftsman will generally rise above his theories. With reference to their native sources of inspiration, these painters might be compared to men fighting with one hand tied behind the back. They may have great skill and dexterity, but they cannot get the full weight of themselves into the blow. As I said, the most obvious disadvantage in their work is the arbitrary limitation of subject interest.

If, in this account of Impressionism, I have dwelt upon the defects rather than the merits of the movement, it has been in order to suggest the reasons for the reaction from it. The probability is that every conscious movement in art is a heresy according to Coleridge's definition of the word. As I have tried to show, the defects of Impressionism were really those of the nineteenth century. They represent the logical excesses of Naturalism, resulting from a too narrow conception of nature. In this connection the words of Reynolds, in his seventh *Discourse*, are worth quoting.

" My notion of nature comprehends not only the forms which nature produces, but also the nature and

internal fabric and organisation, as I may call it, of the human mind and imagination. . . . This general idea, therefore, ought to be called Nature; and nothing else, correctly speaking, has a right to that name." And again in the eighth *Discourse*: "The merit or demerit of the different conduct of Rubens and Rembrandt in those instances which I have given, is not to be determined by the narrow principle of nature, separated from its effect on the human mind. Reason and common-sense tell us, that before, and above all other considerations, it is necessary that the work should be seen, not only without difficulty or inconvenience, but with pleasure and satisfaction; and every obstacle which stands in the way of this pleasure and convenience must be removed."

Reynolds, of course, was a special pleader for the Classical view of the eighteenth century which attached too much importance to general ideas, or, rather, to such general ideas as had the sanction of Classical authority; but, in the light of modern research into the nature of mind, his remarks contain some very sound psychology. So far from smoothing the way to the perception of nature, the Impressionist painters, by their very fidelity to the facts, put obstacles in the way of pleasure and convenience in looking at a picture. At the same time they did call attention to certain aspects of nature, notably effects of light and atmosphere, which had been neglected before; and this may be regarded as their positive and permanent contribution to the art of painting.

CHAPTER IX

CEZANNE, GAUGUIN AND VAN GOGH

IT is usual to speak of Cézanne, Gauguin and Van Gogh as the pioneers of the reaction from Impressionism. That they were conscious of what they are now claimed to stand for may be questioned, but the selection of names is at least convenient. Each of these painters developed a tendency that was incompatible with the general principles of Impressionism, at any rate in theory. Cézanne, with his insistence upon the volumes of objects, rebelled against the disintegration of form which was the logical consequence of divisionism—or, indeed, of any analytical treatment of light. He is reported to have said : " I want to make of Impressionism something solid and permanent like the Old Masters." Gauguin developed a style of rhythmical drawing and emphatic design that was incompatible with the close representation of the facts of nature ; and Van Gogh showed a similar incompatibility in his insistence upon the intrinsic value of paint. His dictum : " Be true to your palette and nature will result " is in itself a contradiction of the theory of Impressionism. At the same time, it must be admitted that all three painters were nourished in the bosom of Impressionism, and that their works show a good many of its characteristics. Perhaps the fairest description of them would be Impressionists dissatisfied with their theory.

This dissatisfaction, however, was only part of the general dissatisfaction of the nineteenth century with itself which began to be apparent in the last quarter. Not more than Impressionism can Post-Impressionism be looked upon as a pure product of the studios. It was the reflection in painting of a changed, or changing, philosophy of life and nature. Irrespective of its application to the arts, Realism as a philosophy had begun to be discredited.

There were many reasons for this, but they can all be reduced to the discovery that the facts would not work as a complete explanation of the universe. It is difficult for a person untrained in philosophy and even unfamiliar with its terminology to move in this region with any sureness; but I suppose that every system of human thought accepts if it does not define certain truths as absolute. The nineteenth century accepted as absolute the facts of nature. It said, in effect, that if you got the facts right you got reality; and all its energies were devoted to gaining a better knowledge of the facts. It admitted all the difficulties in the way of gaining this knowledge, but it never doubted either the facts themselves or the means of their perception. To the credit of the nineteenth century it can be said that its own devoted researches opened the way to its disillusion. Critical research into the intimate constitution of matter, and exploration of the human mind by psychological experiment, both resulted in the same discovery: that what we call facts are, after all, only convenient fancies for dealing with the mystery of life. From being absolute the facts became only relative. It would be idle for me to pretend that I

understand Professor Einstein's Theory of Relativity; but to a layman it looks uncommonly like what may be called the coping-stone to nineteenth century disillusion. Apparently, with every ingenuity of scientific thinking, it reduces all our absolutes to God.

It is hardly necessary to point out that this, though a new application, is not really a new discovery, but only a confirmation by science of what has always been believed by poets and mystics. Relativity, in fact, is the constant belief of art as distinct from its heresies. It is implied even in so matter-of-fact a statement as Reynolds' definition of Nature. The heresy of the nineteenth century was to assume that the facts were absolute. As a result of its investigations it discovered that not only were the facts only relative, but that the means of their perception, the bodily senses, were themselves only relative to unexplored regions of the mind. The facts, even if they existed at all, were doubtful in character, and the only sure thing about the senses was that they were misleading. The result, at the end of the nineteenth century, was a sort of panic in thinking; with all kinds of queer phenomena in the way of moral life-belts.

All this was reflected in art. To a detached observer it is amusing to reflect that if art had not, in the persons of the Impressionists, allied itself with science, it would not have gone astray. As a result of its blind confidence in the facts, science may be said to have let art down. Not unnaturally, art rounded on science and said, in effect: "Damn the facts!" That, at any rate, was the extreme consequence of the reaction from Realism. If the Impressionists made likeness to nature, in

the objective sense, the standard of truth in art, it is hardly an exaggeration to say that the standard of truth adopted by some of the more extreme Post-Impressionists was that of unlikeness to nature.

But this did not happen immediately. Neither in life nor in art did dissatisfaction with Realism result in a sudden revolution in practice. What happened was that, continuing to do things more or less in the same way, people began to do them in a different belief and, consequently, with a different bearing. The notion of unchanging elements with definite atomic weights remained valid for most of the practical purposes of chemistry ; but it could no longer be accepted as a complete and exhaustive explanation of the material universe. Inductive reasoning continued to be a useful guide in the practical affairs of life ; but, though the latest, it could no longer be considered the last word in human faculty or the most important. Intuition, in the broad sense, began to be regarded at least respectfully by the most hard-headed philosophers. The sub-conscious mind became a sort of domestic pet ; something between a mongoose and a gazeka. Art still continued to make use of the facts of appearance as convenient symbols of reality ; but it began to make use of them with a difference ; as temporary substitutes for truth with no special sanctity in themselves.

As might have been expected, religious persons, wiser philosophers, and the greater poets and painters, to whom the relative conception of reality was familiar, at least intuitively, kept their heads ; but some of the less balanced minds began to jump to conclusions. In

their haste to formulate the new knowledge, or new doubt, they became pot-valiant. Because the facts of nature had proved untrustworthy they, so to speak, jumped on them. All sorts of old spiritual and intellectual heresies were revived in such forms as Christian Science, Rosicrucianism (a " Salon of the Rosy Cross " actually appeared in Paris), crystal gazing and Esoteric Buddhism ; and in social and political affairs all sorts of short cuts to the millennium, such as free-love and Protection, were proposed. In art there were all the attempted short cuts to reality that may be grouped together under the general name of Post-Impressionism.

Reduced to its elements, and disregarding all minor developments, the theoretical difference between Impressionism and Post-Impressionism was the substitution of the mental conception for the visual impression as the basis of reality in art. So far so good. As a theory it was nothing more than a re-statement of Reynolds' " notion of nature " ; and something like it was bound to come if only as a result of the invention and rapid improvement of photography.

In the whole history of art there is nothing more amusing than the attitude of Realistic painters to photography, and the successive changes in their attitude. At first they said that photography was not true. What they meant was that there were certain mechanical defects in photography or, rather, certain optical differences between the photographic lens and the human eye, which affected the images formed by them respectively. The obvious fact that the ordinary photograph presents a one-eyed view of nature, the entire inability of the earlier photographers to reproduce

colour, and the uneven response of silver salts to the spectrum—resulting in perversions of tone—were other peculiarities of photography which seemed to support the contention of Realistic painters that it was not true to nature.

The improvement and correction of lenses by the standard of human optics, the application of the stereoscopic principle, the discovery of a means to reproduce colour, and the rectification of tone-values by means of a light filter or screen queered the pitch again; and Realistic painters fell back on vague talk about "selection." Obviously the camera could not select. Then came along Mr. Muybridge with his instantaneous photographs of jumping horses. The engagingly awkward attitudes revealed, and their superficial resemblance to the work of the Japanese animal draughtsmen, then coming into fashion, confused the issue and intrigued the Realistic painters enormously. If the camera could not select in space it could select in time with a celerity and precision beyond the power of any human eye, and the results had all the appeal of novelty. Not only that, but they were another smack at the mere Naturalists. This time photography was hailed not as the enemy of truth but as a scientific witness for Realism. Less reflective painters began feverishly to educate their eyes along the lines of photographic vision, and the fashion in snap-shot drawing survives to this day. The final conclusion of the Realistic painters seemed to be that photography was true, but that for the purposes of art all truth must be diluted with temperament. It was about this time that, inspired by Whistler, painters began to talk seriously about their personalities.

A sort of working compromise between painting and photography was arrived at. Concessions were made on both sides ; eminent painters did not disdain to take hints from photography, photographers prejudiced their legitimate art with reference to painting and, with equal justice on the same grounds, claimed to express their personalities also.

Of course it was all a to-do about nothing. Photography is neither true nor untrue ; it is only capable of accuracy. Painting, on the other hand, is incapable of accuracy and concerned with truth. This is not an arbitrary conclusion ; it is implied in the things that the respective arts are done with. Photography is done with tools, implements and materials of accuracy ; painting is done with tools, implements and materials of truth to nature in Reynolds' definition of " nature " as the whole complex of the facts and the mind that perceives them. So long as painting identifies itself with accurate representation of appearances it is, if not in fact at any rate in possibility, hopelessly outclassed by the camera. But the moment the painter regards appearances as merely symbols of a reality conceived by his mind, he is out of range of any camera that could ever be invented.

The mistake of Impressionism was that it switched off, or tried to switch off, everything but the visual impression ; the mistake of the extreme developments of Post-Impressionism is that they switch off, or try to switch off, everything but intuition. As compared with the deeper, steadier and less conscious working of the time-spirit in contemporary art, these excesses of Post-Impressionism are not unlike those of Christian

Science. They are hasty and arbitrary reactions from the heresies of Realism. There is nothing in Post-Impressionism that is not contained implicitly in the body of earlier painting; and in Reynolds' "notion of nature"; and there is nothing in Christian Science that is not contained implicitly in the body of earlier religious belief; but in each case there is complete isolation of certain truths from all the others in disregard of human faculty and practice. The truths are undeniable in themselves, but they are presented in a form too "neat" for truthful application. One might almost say that the moment a truth is stated explicitly it becomes untrue. It is not so much that Post-Impressionism is untrue to art, or that Christian Science is untrue to Christianity or to science, as that both are untrue to human nature; and it is because they cannot be completely and effectively translated into practice in every emergency that both lend themselves to charlatanism. To put it shortly, Impressionism worshipped the facts; Post-Impressionism despises them. Facts are neither to be worshipped nor despised, but to be accepted for what they are worth as symbols of reality.

But we are going too far ahead. The earlier Post-Impressionists, to give them that name, did not despise the facts but only adapted them to their artistic purpose. Paul Cézanne (1839-1906) was born at Aix in Provence, where his father was a wealthy banker. One of his schoolfellows was Emile Zola, who, later, introduced him to Courbet and Manet in Paris. It is said that the Impressionist painter, Claude Lantier, in Zola's *L'Œuvre* was drawn from Cézanne. Like many

other painters, Cézanne had to encounter a great deal of opposition from his parents before he was allowed to study art, and he undoubtedly suffered all his life from lack of early training. How much or how little he was influenced by Manet it is difficult to say; but, as compared with the other Impressionists, their work has something in common in its respect for the integrity of form. Where Cézanne differs from Manet is in carrying this integrity into the third dimension. He insisted not only upon mass but upon volume.

This concentration upon depth, not as a means of realistic imitation but as a factor of design, is what really distinguishes Cézanne from the other Impressionists. Since it afterwards hardened into what is known as "Cubism," it is worth while examining at some length what it really meant in the hands of Cézanne. One has only to look back to see that the condition of depth has always been recognised in Western painting; it is, indeed, the chief thing that distinguishes Western painting in principle from that of the East. Even where the resemblance is strongest, as between the Italian Primitives and Chinese painters of the same period, the European work includes the third dimension. Personally I am inclined to believe that the difference corresponds to some profound difference between the Western and Eastern mind, affecting the whole of their respective philosophies; but that is a long story. But, at any rate, since the introduction of oil painting, the treatment of the third dimension in Western art declined into a means of realistic illusion. It ceased to be a factor of design.

In their preoccupation with effects of light and

atmosphere, the Impressionists, generally, neglected the third dimension not only as a factor of design but as a means of realistic illusion as well. It is quite likely that their practice in this respect was influenced by the Japanese. If so, their work presents the amusing double anomaly of imitating the accidents, while ignoring the principles of Japanese design and, at the same time, suppressing the real distinction between Eastern and Western painting. That is to say, they imitated the patterns of the Japanese, but stuck to realistic drawing of the silhouettes and abolished the distances between them. In making the best of both worlds, Eastern and Western, they lost the essential characters of both. At any rate what generally strikes you in an Impressionist composition, notably in those of Degas, is the deliberate effort to bring the successive planes of the picture together in a more or less flat pattern; and the unsatisfying nature of such compositions is, I believe, due in great part to the fact that in them two dimensions are treated realistically while the third is not. In order to seem consistent, a flat pattern demands formal treatment of the silhouettes—such as Eastern painters invariably employ. This sounds elaborate but, in reality, it is quite simple. The moment you exclude any of your native instincts in art you are landed in difficulties and anomalies.

What Cézanne did was to restore the third dimension as a factor of design while avoiding it as a means of realistic illusion. He aimed at solidity not to the eye but to the mind. In this respect he justified his claim to be working in the manner of the Old Masters. In the first chapter of this book I suggested that the

superiority of the Italian Primitives in what Mr. Roger Fry called the digestion of facts into form for the purposes of design was partly a virtue of necessity caused by the limitations of their materials, fresco and tempera. It is significant that Cézanne came nearest to the full and consistent realisation of his confessed aims in water-colour ; a medium which has pretty much the same limitations. At any rate, I have seen nothing that gave me such a deep impression of his peculiar powers as the group of landscapes in water-colours in the second Post-Impressionist exhibition at the Grafton Galleries in 1913. In his digestion of facts into form, Cézanne was quite respectful to the facts. He blocked them out, so to speak, in all three dimensions, but preserved enough of their natural character to satisfy the ordinary person.

With his practice of designing in three dimensions to the disregard of realistic illusion, Cézanne combined the positive gains of Impressionism : lightness of key and luminosity of effect. In his modified use of divisionism he often recalls Camille Pissarro. No doubt as a result of his lack of early training, his actual handling of oil paint was always rather clumsy. " Roughly hewn chunks of form," to quote Mr. Charles H. Caffin, in *The Story of French Painting*, is a very apt description of the general effect of his pictures. The same writer says that in a letter dated a year or so before his death Cézanne wrote : " I am too old ; I have not realized ; I shall not realize now. I remain the primitive of the way which I have discovered." This " way " was described by his friend Emile Bernard as " a bridge thrown across conventional routine,

by which impressionism may return to the Louvre and to the life profound."

In this account of Cézanne I have purposely avoided all reference to his personal character and habits; his "stern simplicity," solitariness, and all that. Far too much importance is attached, nowadays, to what is called "personality" in art. One is reminded of the Irishman who played the fiddle, neither by note nor ear but by "main force." The assumption seems to be that art is a form of involuntary action. No doubt everything that a man is comes out in his art, but a moment's reflection shows that it comes out in everything else that he does. Cézanne would have been just as sternly simple and solitary if he had been a grocer or, as his father wanted him to be, a lawyer. What we are concerned with here are the implied æsthetic beliefs and the technical expedients and methods by which the course of painting has been affected.

This applies with particular force to Paul Gauguin (1851-1903), whose artistic meaning and importance have been entirely obscured by the fact that he found Tahiti more congenial than Europe. So have many mates of many schooners, but they have left no impression on painting. It is true that Gauguin, son of a Breton father and a Peruvian half-breed mother, himself declaimed against civilisation, which he called a "disease," but he would have declaimed against it if he had been a curate instead of a painter. Incidentally, it may be remarked that it is precisely the morbid character of civilisation, in the sense of over-civilisation, which makes too much of the Tahitan subjects of Gauguin. Their artistic value, as distinct from their

purely circumstantial interest, is that they supplied him with splendid physical types, peculiarly well adapted to his aims in painting. Exactly the same artistic virtues are to be found in his Breton pictures. They are an extraordinary power of simplification in drawing combined with capacity to design in bold patterns of colour. The discrepancy between design and drawing, which is noticeable in the works of such painters as Degas and Whistler, is entirely absent from those of Gauguin. They are as consistent as Chinese paintings, though much more weighty. Better than any other modern painter, Gauguin exemplifies the power of "significant form"; the direct action of design which makes a picture both moving and memorable. In his case, too, this power proceeded directly from his use of the medium. He showed that oil paint not less than fresco can be used for its legitimate purpose of designing, and in the works of no other modern artist does the paint itself get less in the way of perception.

Nobody who saw the group of works by Gauguin at the first Post-Impressionist exhibition at the Grafton Galleries, in 1910, is likely to forget them. Allowing for the difference of subject, and for Gauguin's peculiar schemes of colour, they had the weight and authority, the complete digestion of material, of Old Masters. The secret of this digestion is indicated by Gauguin himself in one of his letters. He says: "Every human work is a revelation of the individual. Hence there are two kinds of beauty; one comes from instinct, the other from labour. The union of the two—with the modifications resulting therefrom—produces great and

very complicated richness. . . . Raphael's great science does not for a moment prevent me from discovering the instinct of the beautiful in him as the essential quality. Raphael was born with beauty. All the rest in him is modification." Gauguin's peculiar merit as a painter was his mastery of " the modifications resulting therefrom." He refers to Raphael; but the painter whom he recalls in his large and, apparently, easy power of generalisation is, rather, Tintoretto. In the same letter, to Charles Morice, he indicates very shrewdly the real causes of the defects of Impressionism. " Physics, chemistry, *and above all the study of Nature*, have produced an epoch of confusion in art." The italics are mine. Not, of course, that the artist can be too close a student of nature; and Gauguin was the last man in the world to say that he could; it was what Reynolds called " the narrow principle of nature, separated from its effect on the human mind " that he protested against. He recognised that art is a new synthesis of nature, including the mental reactions of the artist as well as the facts, and that it is made, finally, with the hand. The secrets of Gauguin's power are to be found not in Tahiti but in the traditions of painting interpreted by an original mind.

Vincent van Gogh was born at Groot-Zundert in 1853, and died by his own hand in France in 1890. As is well known, the last years of his life were spent in a lunatic asylum; but if there is any evidence of insanity in his art it is only in the attempt to make paint itself express more than it can. For that, when all is said about his passionate love of nature and his humanitarian motives, is the essence of his art: his supreme

confidence in the medium itself. He resembles both Cézanne in blocking out the forms in three dimensions, and Gauguin in simplification of drawing; but more than either of them he relied upon the direct action of paint.

Herr Julius Meier Graefe, quoted by Mr. Frank Rutter in *Revolution in Art*,* says: "His brush strokes not only give things that force themselves upon the eye from a distance with elemental power, but they combine to produce an extraordinary play upon the surface, forming a free and varied ornament, and giving a mysterious animation to the background, as well as a rare splendour of texture to things which stand out against it in sharply defined contours. Fundamentally it is, of course, nothing but a development of the granulations which give the quality to every surface in painting."

Those who remember the paintings of irises and sunflowers and of a cornfield by Van Gogh, in the first Post-Impressionist exhibition at the Grafton Galleries, will recognise the justice of this description. The picture of sunflowers, in particular, was positively uncanny in its cry of paint. That Van Gogh "frequently appears to pass beyond the confines of oil-paint and encroach upon the province of mosaic," to quote Mr. C. J. Holmes,† may be readily admitted. He seems to have been possessed with an almost superstitious belief in the evocative power of brushwork. Herr Meier Graefe's allusion to a "development of the granulations" may be taken to mean the tendency

* *Revolution in Art.* By Frank Rutter. (Art News Press, 1910).
† *Notes on the Post-Impressionist Painters.* By. C. J. Holmes. (Philip Lee Warner, 1910).

which Van Gogh shared with the Neo-Impressionists to give the actual touch of divisionism a decorative and expressive as well as a descriptive function in suggesting the vibration of light.

It is said that Van Gogh's insanity was provoked by his habit of painting in the open air without a hat under the direct rays of the sun, and that after his death it was found that the sun had burnt all the hair off his scalp. M. Bénédite speaks of the "excessive sensibility of his visual sense." There is certainly something in his work that suggests hyperæsthesia of the visual centre in his brain, and it is possible that this was aggravated by the habit. The habit itself, and that of painting sunflowers, seem to indicate a morbid obsession with the idea of sunlight; and the form of his insanity, illustrated by a homicidal attack on Gauguin, points to cerebral irritation.

If these three great painters, Cézanne, Gauguin and Van Gogh, were "revolutionaries" they were only so in the attempt to rescue the art of painting from the abject dependence upon the facts of nature into which it had been led by the Impressionists, and to bring it back into the larger "notion of nature" indicated by Reynolds. As it must have struck everybody who saw the exhibitions of their works at the Grafton Galleries in 1910 and 1913, with all their oddities and excesses in this direction or that, they were much more truly "traditional" in spirit than the other Impressionists—except, perhaps, Manet, who was quite properly included in the first exhibition. Where they differed from the Classical painters was in the extension of "Nature" to include the promptings of

the sub-conscious mind; or, rather, a larger share of these promptings; a character that made them peculiarly expressive of their period; and in the emphasis that they laid upon certain expedients: the realisation of volume in the case of Cézanne, rhythmical design in that of Gauguin, and the direct action of pigment in that of Van Gogh. It will be seen that both the response to the sub-conscious mind and the particular expedients lent themselves to heretical development; but, allowing for the disturbing atmosphere of the times, these men themselves were not very far from a place that can be called central in the tradition of painting.

CHAPTER X

MATISSE AND PICASSO

ALLOWING for minor inflections due to individual talent, all the later developments of Post-Impressionism can be referred to the principles illustrated by Cézanne, Gauguin and Van Gogh or to some theoretical hardening of those principles. Each of the painters named has left what would appear to be direct descendants; and, in addition, there are a number of painters whose practice may be regarded as influenced by one or the other or even by all three in combination. This does not imply lack of originality. The fundamental fact of Post-Impressionism is its reaction from Realism or, if you like to put it that way, from the visual impression as the basis of painting; and this reaction may be attributed to the time-spirit rather than to deliberate choice. Every considerable artist reacts to the time-spirit in his own way; but, painting being an organised art, the number of æsthetic principles is limited, and the number of technical expedients more limited still. Nobody ever painted a picture that could not be compared in some way with pictures that have been painted before.

Before we discuss the later Post-Impressionists in detail it is necessary to say a few words about the development of divisionism which, under the name of Neo-Impressionism, links them or some of them with the Impressionists proper. It can be studied most

conveniently in the works of Paul Signac, in whose hands the method of divisionism introduced by Georges Seurat seems to have been more completely formulated. Signac, himself, claims that divisionism is the æsthetic principle, and that the touch itself is only a means to an end; but, to a detached observer, what distinguishes his work from that of the earlier Impressionists is the organisation of the touch. In their hands the dots or touches of unmixed pigment were employed for a realistic purpose to increase the illusion of light, the touches themselves being, apparently, meant to disappear in the illusion. But in the oil paintings of Signac the touches are frankly avowed; enlarged into more or less rectangular shapes, like little bricks, and very methodically disposed along the lines of the composition, which is carefully considered from the point of view of emotional effect. His method in oils, in fact, closely resembles that of mosaic; and he himself believes that it is best adapted to mural decoration, particularly in badly lighted buildings. At any rate, in his hands, as in those of Seurat himself, the aim is no longer realistic illusion but decoration and expression; so that, while continuing the means, Neo-Impressionism may be regarded as a reaction from Impressionism in principle.

With nice regard for the medium, in water-colour Signac broadens and loosens his method; the pure tints being applied in flowing lines following and emphasising the design. In this manner he has produced many delightful works, particularly of scenes in Southern seaports, quivering with light, but essentially non-realistic in aim.

MATISSE AND PICASSO

The same non-realistic character, combined with a strong feeling for decorative design, is to be found in the works of the Belgian painter, Théo van Rysselberghe. His colour is " decomposed," but the touches are turned to decorative and expressive account, notably in poetical compositions of the nude in landscape. Modified Neo-Impressionism is also to be observed in the works of the French painters, Maurice Denis, Henri Martin, Gaston La Touche, Henri Le Sidaner, and Simon Bussy. In some of them the method is combined with other tendencies that can be called Post-Impressionistic, and in others the aim is more Naturalistic ; but none of them is an Impressionist in the optical sense of the word. In every case the touch is used for decoration as well as illusion.

The most important of the later French Post-Impressionists, using the word in a general sense, are undoubtedly Henri Matisse and Pablo Picasso. Any estimate of these two painters, however, can only be tentative. Both of them have passed through a bewildering number of phases, some of them, apparently, without much conviction, but there is nothing in the work of either that cannot, in principle, be reduced to one or other of the expedients employed by the fathers of the movement. In general Matisse seems to derive from Gauguin, and Picasso from Cézanne ; but against this it must be said that Matisse will often pay particular attention to the third dimension, in its geometrical aspect of Cubism, while Picasso, in his drawings, will seem to be inspired by considerations of rhythmical design without much regard for depth. Versatility and ingenuity rather than weight and force

of conviction are displayed by both artists; so that their talents strike one as being of a slighter order than those of their ancestors in the movement; but it must be remembered that they have not the same solid body of Realism to react against. That particular battle is won. Realistic pictures are still painted, but nobody, nowadays, believes that truth to nature is in proportion to the degree of accuracy with which the facts of nature, solid or atmospheric, are represented to the eye. One distinction, however, must be made; and, unfortunately, it applies to most of the later Post-Impressionists. However emphatic the means adopted by them, Cézanne, Gauguin and Van Gogh seem to have been conscious only of the end in view. Both Matisse and Picasso are acutely conscious both of the means and of themselves. How far this new self-consciousness in art is to be attributed to the time-spirit, and how far it is peculiar to the movements associated with Post-Impressionism, must remain an open question; but there can be no doubt that it causes one to suspend judgment as to the artistic value of the movements. In the long run self-consciousness in art always means the exclusion of some part of the artist; and any convention, formula or expedient that will not contain the whole of him is of only technical interest.

Henry Matisse was born in 1862. His confessed principles are reported to be "simplification, organization and expression." Whatever he is, he is a very accomplished draughtsman and painter. These two words indicate a character, not easy to describe, that is common to most of the later Post-Impressionists. It amounts to a frank exposure of the acts of drawing

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and painting in making the picture. One of the aims of Impressionism, of all Naturalistic painting, indeed, is to conceal them ; to make the picture seem to grow out of a series of touches, each of which contributes to the triple responsibility of form, value and colour. In the extremely Academic forms of Realism, of course, the touches themselves are concealed as far as possible ; *ars est celare artem* being here interpreted literally, so that you cannot see how the thing is done. With Matisse there is no concealment of the means. I do not mean that his pictures are, so to speak, drawn first and painted afterwards, but that the movements of the brush in making the outline and suggesting the values are frankly revealed. His pictures are, indeed, pre-eminently records of the gestures employed in making them.

In his style of drawing Matisse carries the simplification of Gauguin to a degree that may be called calligraphic. That is to say, while the general character of the forms is preserved, and sometimes emphasised by amplification or actual distortion, all minor inflections of contour are sacrificed to the characteristic movement of the hand holding the brush. Most of his works that have been exhibited in London have been of an engaging slightness ; arabesques of the figure, interiors in which the third dimension was indicated by a light hatching of colour at the edge of the retiring planes, and small landscapes, carefully constructed though frugal in execution. These works revealed him as a charming colourist, with a shorthand method that not only seemed adequate for what he had to say but conveyed the winning impression that he would rather seem to say little than go beyond his personal feeling.

In these pictures the facts of nature, though modified and occasionally distorted for convenience of design, were not rejected; but we have also been shown pictures by Matisse with a definite tendency towards abstraction. This, of course, is one of the vexed questions of modern art. It seems to me to be mainly a matter of consistency. The degree to which a painter "digests his facts into form," to make use of Mr. Roger Fry's convenient phrase, for the purposes of design, is immaterial so long as he digests them all to the same degree. Off-hand there seems no reason why the same painter should not with equal sincerity practice many degrees of abstraction; from close representation of the facts to pure arabesques of form and colour expressing the emotions he derives from them; thus illustrating by stages the saying that "all painting tends to approach to the condition of music." What perplexes the student, infuriates the Philistine, and throws doubt upon the good faith of the painter is the presence of little chunks of realistic or comparatively realistic detail in a soup of abstraction; and it cannot be denied that Matisse has contributed to these effects.

The same applies in even greater degree to the Spanish painter, Pablo Picasso. I do not know the date of his birth, but Mr. Frank Rutter, writing in 1910, describes him as under thirty then. Possibly on account of his race, he seems to be of tougher fibre than Matisse; and his instincts lead him towards the solid blocking out of Cézanne rather than the rhythmical simplification of Gauguin. This blocking out he carries to its geometrical extremity in the form of Cubism. To a detached observer the trouble seems to be that he does

not trust his instincts far enough; but is for ever breaking down into realism. It is difficult to resist the conclusion that he sometimes does this on purpose, "to make it more difficult," as the Irishman introduced the irrelevant factor into the riddle. In the later works of Picasso the designing in three dimensions, with lapses into realistic representation, is complicated by the introduction of a time-element, or fourth dimension; the forms being "produced," as a geometrician would say, in one direction or the other—apparently in obedience to the axiom of Cézanne that "all forms in nature create a sensation of revolving upon themselves and around a point in space." Not content with suggesting the sensation, Picasso tries to realise it; with the result that he seems to be painting a thing in two places at the same time.

On the other hand, in many of his drawings—little groups of figures including, generally, a guitar or mandoline player—Picasso declines into a rather sentimental exercise in rhythmical design. Both he and Matisse appear to have been influenced by the study of El Greco. At this distance of time it is impossible to say what El Greco was after in his distortion of the human figure. The explanation that it was all due to optical astigmatism is too simple to be convincing. It seems to me far more like what may be called mental astigmatism; that is to say, the difficulties of a highly imaginative artist trying to express himself in a realistic convention of painting. Discouraged from translating his facts into form, he naturally distorts them. If this be true, any imitation of the peculiarities of El Greco by a modern painter can only be compared to

the imitation of the patch on the trousers by the Indian tailor.

Picasso has not yet been well represented in London; but from what has been seen of his work and that of Matisse the impression formed is of intelligent and accomplished painters and draughtsmen playing with principles, rather than of original forces. In excuse it must be remembered that the present conditions in Paris are the worst possible for art. Even more than in London it is an affair of studio and café discussion, exhibitions, and dealers' exploitation. In this atmosphere a premium is put on ideas, as distinct from craftsmanship, particularly the sort of ideas that lend themselves to "stunting." The cry, backed by commercial opportunities, is always for "some new thing." How far these conditions are inevitable in the modern world (with its lack of faith, rapid communication, and general instability) and how far they are due to the alterable, if stubborn, fact that the modern artist has no material basis in the community, would be a difficult question to answer; but it is true that the French painter, even more than his British colleague, is in the unfortunate position of being "all dressed up and nowhere to go."

At least it may be claimed for Matisse, Picasso, and their followers, that, with all their absurdities and apparent perversities, they have kept the art of painting in the region of design. So far, at any rate, they are traditional, as the Impressionists were not. The objection that their designs do not proceed from craftsmanship, but are often arbitrary inventions, may be met with the counter-charge that the same objection applies

to pretty well the whole of modern life, particularly in the region of what is called "business"; and the further objection that their craftsmanship itself is crude is easily answered. Technical training in painting with a Realistic aim is no training whatever for the purposes of design. If a man has devoted all his powers to imitating farm-yard noises on the violin, you cannot expect him to have exact intonation and pure quality of tone when he begins to play a melody. The comparison, disparaging to the Post-Impressionists, that is often made between their workmanship and that of the Chinese painters, whose principles were somewhat similar, at any rate in theory, is pointless. Eastern artists have always been taught from earliest childhood to draw and paint with a view to design and expression. Even in its most realistic phases, in the matter of subject, there has never been in Eastern art any attempt at optical illusion. If the Post-Impressionists are incompetent as craftsmen the blame is due not to them but rather to the Academies which, at any time since the fifteenth century and particularly during the nineteenth, have taught the student only to imitate nature and left him entirely unequipped for the business of designing in paint. When, in addition to this, we remember the greater difficulty of designing in three dimensions the inferiority of the Post-Impressionists to the Chinese painters in urbanity of workmanship is not surprising.

To say that the predominating influence in French Post-Impressionism would appear to be that of Cézanne is, perhaps, only another way of saying that constructive design in three dimensions is more akin to the

native genius than rhythmical design in two. The examples of Nicolas Poussin, Chardin, Daumier, Millet and Courbet seem to support this idea. At any rate there is a long list of painters pursuing this kind of exercise, with many degrees of abstraction, from comparatively realistic representation of the facts of nature to extreme, geometrical, Cubism—Dérain, Marchand, Braque, Herbin, Jules Flandrin, and Lhote are only a few of the names that come to mind in this connection. Several of these painters concentrate, rather dully, on still-life subjects; but there is an explanation of this in the conditions of contemporary life which deny them any opportunity for the imaginative exercise of their constructive powers.

In the practice of rhythmical design the most noteworthy figure is that of Maurice Denis. In his hands, combined with the technique of Neo-Impressionism, it is applied to subjects recalling those of the more poetical English Pre-Raphaelites: legendary incidents and Classical idylls. He is said to have been a pupil of Gauguin. He certainly resembles that painter in his principles of composition, but in spirit he seems to derive rather from Puvis de Chavannes. His world of dancing line and untroubled spaces of pale colour is not easily forgotten.

Most of the Post-Impressionist painters may be said to rely on the direct action of pigment for their emotional effects, some of them rather aggressively; but the painter in whom the influence of Van Gogh is most apparent is the Belgian, Maurice de Vlaminck. The landscapes of this artist, with their unsteady drawing, deep, "juicy" tones of colour and sudden

modulations into sharp lights, are rather disconcerting, but they suggest a genuine enjoyment of the handling of paint. The peculiar slipperiness of technique may be due to the fact that Vlaminck worked for a time in the porcelain factory at Sèvres.

This account of the later French Post-Impressionists does not pretend to be exhaustive. I have only named those painters who seem to me to illustrate the special characteristics of the movements associated with the name. Nor have I made any attempt to specify the " 'ism " to which the individual painter belongs. Such " 'isms " are invented in Paris from day to day ; but they all appear to share in the general reaction from Realism. How far they are heretical, as compared with the central tradition of painting, it is too early to say ; but it seems to me to be something like this. If Impressionism, as it undoubtedly did, unduly exalted the claims of the eye in establishing truth to nature in painting, Post-Impressionism unduly exalts the claims of the sub-conscious mind, and unduly emphasises the artistic expedients that appeal to it directly. If this be true, it is only another way of saying that Post-Impressionism reflects the general tendency of the period.

CHAPTER XI

FUTURISM

THE one thing certain about Futurism is that it is as much a sentimental as an artistic movement. That is both its justification and its weakness. The movement started in Italy some ten or twelve years ago as a protest by a band of energetic and intelligent young writers, painters and sculptors against the view that their country was nothing more than a vast museum of the past. On human grounds the protest deserved every sympathy; artistically it was a very bad start indeed.

Art knows nothing of sentiments, either for or against. The mere fact that it was a protest made Futurism much more dependent upon the past than if it had been a development of tradition. But besides being a protest against the past, Futurism was also a glorification of the present. This positive character was no better than the negative. Genuine art always does express its own period, but the moment art sets out with that intention it ceases to be genuine. It bebecomes a form of propaganda. As an artistic movement, Futurism can only be said to exist partly by virtue of the past it declaimed against, and partly by suffrage of the facts of contemporary life that it glorified as its subject matter. In other words, it was entirely dependent on circumstances outside itself.

This consciousness of period is worth considering

for a moment because it is a characteristic weakness of modern times. In art it is by no means confined to the movements that are called revolutionary. It was present in Realism, as illustrated by the glorification of industrial subjects and cabaret scenes, and it comes out in the writings of Mr. Rudyard Kipling and Mr. H. G. Wells. The point about it is that it mistakes incidental differences for the essential differences which are expressed in art unconsciously in response to what may be called the time-spirit. "Predestination in the stride O' yon connecting rod," simply means that the speaker had never been impressed by the dozen parallels to predestination in the natural forces of which the steam-engine is only an arbitrary limitation. Art will, of course, make use of anything that suits its purpose; but its reality as an expression of period is to be found in what it takes for granted. If it betrays "a standing still at, a standing in fear or amazement" at any contemporary fact or phenomenon, it must be classed with the superstitions and not with the beliefs of its period.

Futurism is full of this amazement. Its corresponding fear is of the facts and phenomena of the past. A large part of Boccioni's book, *Pittura, Scultura Futuriste* (*Dinamismo Plastico*),* which may be taken as the official exposition of the movement, is divided between violent denunciation of the past and hectic appreciation of the present. In discussing the artistic principles of Futurism, the author is at more pains to establish their novelty than their truth. He is obsessed with the fear that somebody will mistake Futurism for a natural

* *Edizioni Futuriste di "Poesia."* (Milano, 1914)

development from the past. As a human document the book is intensely interesting; and its logical consistency and vigour of style both lend colour to the belief that the leaders of the Futurist movement were writers, and pre-eminently scientific thinkers, first, and painters and sculptors afterwards. That is to say, they formulated their artistic principles, and then proceeded to illustrate them in their works. It is, indeed, probable that the modern Italian genius is scientific rather than artistic.

The principles of Futurism, as I understand them, are ingenious and consistent. They amount to saying that the true subject matter of painting and sculpture is not objects themselves but the forces and energies by which they are conditioned, not only in relation to each other but in their very existence. Roughly, this is nothing more than a deduction for artistic purposes from the idea that matter is a form of energy. In application it means painting not the engine but the "go" of the engine; not the bottle but the intermolecular stresses and strains, the centrifugal and centripetal forces, of which its visible form is the resultant; or, rather, the sensation of their development in space. All this, as somebody said, is perilously like trying to paint "the grin without the cat." The obvious retort is that such has always been the unconscious aspiration of art. The peculiarity of the Futurists is that they try to do it on reasoned principles.

These principles themselves are not new; they are only newly and nakedly extracted from the practice of drawing, painting and sculpture. Every considerable artist in the past, at any rate down to the heresy of

Realism, has painted not the tree but the growth of the tree; not the man but his livingness. He has done it not from reasoned conviction but by organic sympathy in the handling of his materials. As Emerson said: "Before a man can draw a tree properly he must have been a tree"; must have felt in his nerves and muscles the laws of its growth. This organic sympathy, and its only possible means of expression in art, that is to say, through handling the materials, gives a clue to the weakness of Futurism as an artistic philosophy. It is significant that in the whole of Boccioni's book there is no reference to the nature of the materials in which the works of painting and sculpture are to be produced—except to claim the possible occurrence of twenty different materials in a single work of sculpture. Apparently the materials are looked upon merely as means to substantiate the theories—pretty much as in modern commerce the goods are looked upon merely as means to substantiate the advertisements. This may be science or business, but it certainly is not creative art; which demands conception and execution in and according to the ways of some definite material.

Solvitur ambulando is, in fact, the soundest of all maxims in art. When a man paints anything with full artistic sympathy he reproduces not only its form but its energies, its "dynamism," in the very act, in so far as they are capable of being reproduced effectively in the medium he is using. The movement of the hand in a particular material in response to the total reaction of the artist to the subject or idea, and not the judgment of his eyes or the reasoning of his brain, is the determining factor in all forms of graphic and plastic

art. The successive mistakes of Impressionism and Futurism might be defined by saying that they abstracted respectively the judgment of the eyes and the reasoning of the brain from this creative act of the hand, and erected their philosophy of art upon the abstraction.

As for the pre-occupation of the Futurists with machinery and its action as the subject matter of art, that is nothing more than the old nursery quarrel about the clock-work engine and the wooden horse. The imaginative child, as a rule, prefers a toy which reminds him of the forces and energies of nature at large; while the unimaginative and merely intelligent child prefers them "potted." In that form he can actually see them at work. So the unimaginative but intelligent man is more "amazed" at the dynamo than at the lightning; at the come and go of a piston than at the beating of the human heart. It is merely a matter of weak imaginative digestion.

To turn from the theoretical principles of Futurism to its works is to experience a great disappointment. It is not that the works are too abstract, but that they are not nearly abstract enough to illustrate the principles. As pictures they hinder perception, and as diagrams they are confused. Realism will keep creeping in. About six or seven years ago we had a considerable exhibition of Italian Futurist paintings, drawings and sculpture, at the Doré Galleries. In looking at them it was difficult to resist the conclusion that Futurism was really an application of "the movies" to Impressionism or, at most, to Cubism. "Plastic dynamism," in practice, resolved itself into the repetition or the

prolongation of natural forms along the lines of their movement as conceived by the mind. That the forms were distorted did not affect their essential realism.

All this, of course, was only what might have been expected of an art based on extracted principles instead of on the *solvitur ambulando* translation by the hand in the act of drawing, painting and modelling. By far the most satisfactory of the works exhibited were some drawings and paintings by Giacomo Balla. They were, in effect, " graphs " of different manifestations of energy, reinforced or " rendered," as an architect would say, with pleasant gradations of colour. They were not only interesting theoretically but ingenious as designs, and at any rate neat in workmanship. Some paintings of dancers by Gino Severini were entertaining in subject and gay in colour ; but their only discoverable principle was that of disjointed Realism—pretty much as if the successive images, or partial images, of the cinematograph had been presented simultaneously at rest.

The real interest of Futurism is as the scientific statement of a sentimental reaction from the past. This is worth bearing in mind ; because there have been attempts to cultivate Futurism in England, where the excuse for the reaction does not exist and the scientific habit of mind, at any rate among artists, is wanting. Probably this last is the reason why " Futurism " is the popular name over here for any extravagance in art that does not explain itself.

There is delicious irony in the fact that the most important product of Futurism, the sworn enemy of books and critics, should have been so far a critical

essay. Whatever he may be as a painter and sculptor, Boccioni is an excellent writer upon æsthetics. His account of the theoretical principles involved in the artistic movements since, and including, Impressionism is the clearest I have read. He is the thoughtful philosopher of Futurism, as Marinetti is its able journalist and " publicity agent."

CHAPTER XII

MR. BRANGWYN, MR. SICKERT, MR. STEER AND MR. JOHN

WHAT was said about the peculiarities of English art in chapters six and seven is more and more evident as we approach the present. We English are often called a conservative race. That may mean several things. On the one hand it may mean that we are reluctant to change, and on the other it may mean that we have less need to change because our development is more steady. On the whole I am inclined to think that the last explanation is the truer. The mere fact that with at least equal progress in social, political and economical affairs with any other nation in the world we have not, at any rate since the Commonwealth, found it necessary to change the form of our constitution would seem to support this view. Looking back to the Middle Ages, we find that we have travelled the same distance as any nation on the Continent; but we have not, like most of them, done it by leaps and bounds. We have had our great political events, but, so far as the mass of people is concerned, the changes in English history have been almost imperceptible.

A nation is something more than a collection of individuals, but what is true of the individual is broadly true of the nation. When, without any shirking of life or experience, an individual progresses from youth

to age without any sensational changes in his moral or material affairs, the explanation is generally to be found in stability of character. Assuming that he has lived a reasonably full and not a cloistered life, this stability of character means a comparatively even development of all his powers and capacities. Though he has exercised them all, he has not allowed his intellect or his emotions or his appetities to run away with him, but has grown up, as we say, " all together," He has had his experiences, but since all his powers and capacities have taken part in them he has preserved his balance. From time to time he may have lost his heart or his head or his footing ; but, in the long run, he has been true to himself.

Such an individual may not be very exciting to contemplate at any given moment ; but, granting a respectable range and degree of powers and capacities, he generally inspires confidence. Without any vainglory we can claim this character of the individual for the British nation as a whole and say that it is reflected in British art. British painting appears to be Conservative because it has preserved its balance. It reflects the national stability of character. If we compare it to-day with what it was at the end of the eighteenth century we find as great a difference as we do in France; but the changes have been more gradual.

I should hesitate to say that the reason is that more of the national character is expressed in British than in French painting, but it seems true that the national character is expressed in it more evenly. Revolutionary changes, in art as in everything else, generally mean an earlier suppression. Something has been arbitrarily

kept out, and then it comes in with a rush. A revolution, in fact, corresponds pretty closely to an epileptic fit in the individual. Owing to some defect or obstruction in its channels his nervous energy has been dammed up to breaking point, and then it is discharged in a paroxysm. Thus, we might say that the rush of "nature" into French art and literature during the nineteenth century was more violent and extreme than in England, mainly because the preceding Classical tradition was more rigorous in France than it was over here. One has only to compare David, Prud'hon and Ingres; Corneille and Racine; with contemporary English painters and writers to see that this is true—allowing for the fact that the rush of nature into French literature, with Rousseau, was earlier than into French painting. In the same way it is reasonable to suppose that the extreme character of the Post-Impressionist reaction in France was due to the fact that the scientific Realism of the nineteenth century, in the form of Impressionism, was pushed to extremity in that country.

This may be called only another way of saying that we take things more easily over here. But taking things easily does not necessarily mean that you do not feel them. It may only mean that the reaction is more distributed; that more of yourself is involved in it. Perhaps the simplest way of explaining what I mean is to say that painting is on a broader base in England than it is in France. It includes much more of the susceptibilities of the ordinary person. The greater amount of amateurism, often looked upon as a sign of artistic weakness, in England is in itself a sign of this.

Another way of putting it would be to say that painting in France is more intelligent. Consequently it is more immediately and evidently subject to changes of opinion. Conviction, which depends upon a host of circumstances outside the region of intelligence, is another matter.

I do not mean that painting in France is more superficial than it is in England, but only that it is more exclusively intellectual. The artistic life of Paris is more distinct and highly organised than that of London. This, which may be looked upon as an advantage from one point of view, is a disadvantage from another; because it means comparative isolation of the artist from the general life of the community. He is exposed to keener but, on the whole, narrower criticism. The English artist comes much more in contact with all sorts of people. As a rule his interests, apart from intellectual interests, are wider. Very often he has a hobby outside his art; is a sportsman of some kind, or a gardener or, at any rate, a lover of outdoor life.

Whatever the reason, it cannot be denied that English painting, though obviously exposed to the same moral and intellectual disturbances as French painting, does not react so sharply in the form of artistic movements. But it is by no means certain that its reaction is not deeper. Personally I am inclined to think that the effects of what for convenience we call Post-Impressionism, though less obvious, will be more lasting in England than in France. For one thing, it is more akin to the subjective character of the English mind. However you look at it, and in spite of its perversities, Post-Impressionism is an attempt to bring

back the art of painting into the region indicated by Reynolds' notion of nature as comprehending "not only the forms which nature produces, but also the nature and internal fabric and organisation, as I may call it, of the human mind and imagination." The very fact that English painting had not been deflected so far in the other direction, towards the "narrow principles of nature, separated from its effect on the human mind," would account for the milder character of Post-Impressionism in this country. It is true that, as in the case of Impressionism, we have had extreme forms of the movements associated with it, but they were obviously borrowed from France. Direct imitations don't count. What we have to get at is how far and in what way English painting has reacted to the same causes which produced Post-Impressionism in France.

Therefore, before turning to the English Post-Impressionists—Cubists, Futurists, Vorticists, or whatever they may happen to call themselves—it will be well to consider a few painters who illustrate the combined persistence and flexibility of the English tradition; in other words, its vitality. Three typical examples are Mr. Frank Brangwyn, Mr. Walter Sickert and Mr. Augustus E. John. Each has reacted to the time-spirit in his own way, but only the last can be said to show any traces of Post-Impressionism.

Mr. Brangwyn, who is of Welsh extraction, was born at Bruges in 1867. If Continental opinion goes for anything, he is our most considerable living artist, and it is probable that his estimation here, though very high, is less than it would be if he were not so representative. We take him for granted pretty much as we

take Mr. Thomas Hardy for granted in literature. This, though ungrateful, is natural enough. A larger edition of ourselves, even a much larger edition, in any department of life, is not so striking as a type that presents some alien characteristics.

Referring to Mr. Brangwyn's "Market in Morocco," bought by the French State for the Luxembourg Museum from the Salon of 1895, M. Bénédite says: "Evidently he follows directly the traditions of the great French orientalists, Delacroix and Decamps." This was merely an accident of subject, or at most a temporary pre-occupation. If every man must have his label, Mr. Brangwyn is a Romantic Naturalist of a native type. There is nothing in his work to suggest an interest in Eastern manners and customs or history. Except in so far as he has been influenced by Eastern decorative art, in the form of tiles and carpets, as the French orientalists were not, his orientalism is really an expression of the romance of commerce, of sea-traffic in particular. It is, in fact, the feeling that sends an imaginative boy to sea translated into painting. One has only to think of the British Empire, and how it came about, to recognise that this feeling is peculiarly if not exclusively English. The inspiration of the French orientalists was a literary inspiration, akin to Byronism.

Mr. Brangwyn is about the least literary painter that ever lived. At the same time, it would be difficult to think of any other painter, in any country, who has given such full expression to the romance, the sheer romance, of commerce and industry. Most painters of industrial subjects betray what may be called a

sociological tendency. To put it crudely, it would be impossible to tell from Mr. Brangwyn's pictures whether he is on the side of Capital or Labour. But he is passionately on the side of the job itself. Paradoxical as it may sound at a time of Labour unrest, in this he interprets the secret passion of the sailor, docker and navvy. He releases from political and economical entanglements the hidden aspirations of the worker and even of the City man; the romance of the job that they dare not indulge for fear of the other side. But he has no opinion about the ultimate meaning of work. He presents it, not as a fatality, like Millet; nor as a tragedy, like Meunier; nor as a moral duty, like Madox Brown; but as a form of expression with no ulterior motive. He is not even interested pictorially in the results of work when it is done; and the demolition of a building gives him as much artistic pleasure as its construction. As nearly as possible he paints work, the actual doing, freed from all its consequences and implications.

Nor is his romantic enjoyment limited to manual labour. The facts of commerce, the mysterious richness of "bales of merchandize," excite his imagination in exactly the same way. He discovers under the aridity of modern business the old spirit of the merchant adventurers, as it undoubtedly survives in the City of London. His decorations to Skinners' Hall are perhaps the most characteristic things he has done. They embody not only his own pictorial and imaginative interests but the spirit of the place and the deeper sentiments of its owners. Equally Mr. Brangwyn responds to the romance of the road; not any particular

road but " the road," in the Stevensonian sense, with its atmosphere of adventure that is suggested not only by the knight errant and the pilgrim, but by Dick Turpin and Dick Whittington and even the commercial traveller. To sum it up in a phrase, the inspiration of Mr. Brangwyn's art is the pageant of life as it appeals to every kind of temperament in some form and degree.

But, in his response to the pageant of life, Mr. Brangwyn is pure painter. Even in his drawings, etchings and lithographs he cannot be described as an illustrator, because it is always the pictorial and not the descriptive or documentary value of the scene or incident that appeals to him. There is nothing to show that he is aware of what the subject means apart from its pictorial meaning. Though he gives you the essential character of the subject picturesque accidents, the drama of light and shade, are more to him than logic of structure. Thus, though he often paints architectural subjects, he seldom gives any hint of being interested in the architecture itself. He is a designer by instinct rather than by reasoned conviction. That is to say, he observes the facts realistically, but they become decorative in the process of translation by his brush, pencil or needle. Supposing him to have thought it out, you would expect him to say that painting must be a decorative art because the materials of it are decorative, both in themselves and in the way they have to be used. " Rhythmical design " is with him not a theory but a consequence of the way he handles his tools. That his design is not only rhythmical but rhetorical is an accident of personality and, in itself, presumptive evidence that he is an Englishman. Technically, he

BRANGWYN, SICKERT, STEER AND JOHN recalls both Morland and Rowlandson, resembling the one in the fatness of his paint and the other in the flourish of his drawing.

No living painter better illustrates the Romantic Naturalism of the nineteenth century; and the fact that he carries it triumphantly through the present proves that artistic movements do not go by the clock. Mr. Brangwyn has responded to both Eastern art and Impressionism, but he has taken them in his stride, preserving not only his own individuality but the general character of the national school to which he belongs. His Naturalism has never hardened into Realism because the impulse behind it is too strong to be turned into an intellectual back-water. For the same reason Post-Impressionism would be meaningless to him; because he has never fallen into the heresy that it was necessary to correct. If, as M. Bénédite says, he represents "the spirit of the age," he represents something that is now on trial because of its mistakes and not in the character that finds expression in his paintings.

Mr. Walter Sickert, on the other hand, may be said to represent the extreme disillusionment—if the word will pass—of the late nineteenth century. He sees all the mistakes, but withholds judgment. Lacking Mr. Brangwyn's romantic temperament, he is too sincere to pretend to an enthusiasm he does not feel; and, on the other hand, he is without the moral indignation which would have put him into the class of Swift and Hogarth. His attitude to the life of his times is one of acceptance with ironical comment. Of all the English painters who have been influenced by French

Impressionism, Mr. Sickert has best succeeded in digesting it into the native tradition. On the one hand he shows not a trace of scientific theory, and on the other he makes no attempt to exclude any subject interest which may happen to present itself. In this respect he is on much firmer ground than Whistler. He has no artistic attitude.

At no time does Mr. Sickert's acceptance of native characteristics come out more strongly than when he paints similar subjects to those of Manet and Degas. Like them he takes a special interest in the diversions of city life ; but when he paints them he gives you the true London equivalent of the Parisian institution and not, like many English painters who have accepted the same technical influences, an English pub' or music-hall with a French accent. He translates absinthe into beer, and the *comédienne* into the " serio-comic." Indeed, he may almost be said to have discovered the true London Bohemianism as distinct from the imported variety ; and, with none but a painter's or draughtsman's purpose, his work in this vein, whether as regards the stage or the domestic interior, will have documentary value in the future—particularly since it deals with disappearing rather than immediate phases. In his landscape work Mr. Sickert is equally true to native character. His paintings of such places as Brighton and Bath have something more than truth of atmosphere in the Impressionistic sense ; without any literary intention, they have the same sort of vivacity that would appear in the pages of a good novelist. If what, in the third chapter of this book, I called " prose painting " is a possible art, Mr. Sickert has come

nearer than anybody to concealing the inevitable discrepancy between the facts and the medium. Or, to put it another way, to the theoretically impossible feat of using paint realistically and decoratively at the same time. It is only made possible by extreme selection of the facts and the nicest adjustment of natural rhythms —by the same expedients as good prose writing. The problem in both cases is good composition without the obvious effect of deliberate design.

It is this, as much as anything perhaps, that has made Mr. Sickert such a valuable influence upon young painters. In the present reaction from Realism, nothing is easier than for a young painter to fall into hasty generalisations; to let poetical rhythms run away with him before he has mastered the facts that they should contain in solution. There is a parallel to this danger in the influence of Swinburne as a writer. Or, to take a closer example, nothing is easier to imitate than the rhetorical rhythms of Mr. Brangwyn. As employed by him they may be too florid and exuberant to please all tastes; but, like *baroque* architecture and decoration in Southern countries, they carry conviction because they proceed from temperament, whereas in the hands of imitators they are apt to be empty flourishes. But in order to design like Mr. Sickert it is necessary to keep pretty close to the facts. That his influence is no check to originality is proved by the fact that several painters who have experienced it, directly or indirectly, have afterwards developed in a much more decorative manner. He compels the mastery of prose before experiments in verse. In view of modern tendencies he might be said to keep a hand on the

brake of expression lest painting should run away into generalisations before it has made sure of its ground by the study of particulars.

This book being a sketch of movements and tendencies rather than a study of individual artists, it is not necessary to do more than refer to the number of excellent painters who share with Mr. Sickert what may be called the domestication of French Impressionism without prejudice to the native tradition. A brilliant example is Mr. P. Wilson Steer. His landscape work is particularly interesting because it seems to show the development of Impressionism from both Turner and Constable. No living painter excels him in the power of translating Naturalistic vision into terms of painting. Like Turner himself, he is able to reduce a scene to veils of colour and still preserve enough likeness to nature to satisfy a person who wants to be reminded of the facts themselves. More genial in his outlook than Mr. Sickert, in both his landscape and his figure painting, he indulges the sentiment which is one of the peculiar charms of English art. He may be said to have benefited more and been hurt less by the influence of the French Impressionists than almost any other English painter.

Mr. Steer was one of the original founders in 1885 of the New English Art Club, " by artists who felt that their work was out of sympathy with the general quality of work at other exhibitions." The use of the word " quality " has been amply justified. Though it cannot be denied that its activities have been accompanied by an unnecessary limitation of the popular appeal of art, it is true that to the New English Art Club belongs

mainly the credit for keeping up the technical standard of drawing and painting in England through the closing years of the nineteenth century.

The artist who best illustrates the natural as distinct from the deliberate response of English painting to the reaction which resulted in the various forms of Post-Impressionism is undoubtedly Mr. Augustus E. John. I put it that way because it would be difficult to find in the work of Mr. John the characteristics of any definite " 'ism." It is the spirit rather than the heretical tendencies of Post-Impressionism that his work embodies. In that sense it is even more " in the movement " than that of any of the later French Post-Impressionists.

One reason for this is not far to seek. From beginning to end, and however closely, at moments, it approaches the facts of nature, his art is based upon drawing and painting, and not upon any theory of representation. It is traditional both in the sense of being derived from craftsmanship, and inseparable from it, and in the sense of style. Allowing for the difference of period, with the inevitable changes in emotional and intellectual content, it is as traditional as the art described in the *Discourses* of Reynolds. Paradoxical as it may sound, nothing is more flexible than tradition, because it is not committed to anything outside itself. On the other hand, art which has reasoned itself out of tradition with reference to some " narrow principle of nature separated from its effect on the human mind," slightly to paraphrase the words of Reynolds, can only return by reasoning itself back again. To put it graphically, tradition bends ; while art which refers to nature for guidance, can only progress in a series of sharp zig-zags

according to the changing views of nature; and every zig-zag overshoots the centre line. The proof is in the facts. With all his dependence upon tradition, and leaving subject out of the question, Reynolds *did* reflect the eighteenth century; and in the same way Mr. John reflects the twentieth.

What it amounts to is that the only trustworthy reflection of period in art is unconscious; and, as a rule, it is reflected in proportion as the artist is preoccupied with his craft. In holding the mirror up to nature his business is to keep the mirror bright. Nature will do the rest, without any interference on his part, through his ordinary susceptibilities as a human being. Mr. John is extraordinarily susceptible. He seems to live habitually on that plane of consciousness between thinking and feeling which is the peculiar playground of the time-spirit, as it is the reservoir of creative impulse. Except in portraiture he seems to avoid rather than look for contemporary subjects. His decorative compositions are as nearly independent of time and place as pictures could be, though they often contain frank allusions to painters of the past. Yet they are full of the spirit of the present, with its "obstinate questionings of sense and outward things," and new attention to the promptings of the sub-conscious mind. Often it would be difficult to assign a definite meaning to his pictures, but they always seem to have a meaning, probably beyond his own exposition in words. Without any confusion between the methods of the two arts, they bring painting nearer to the condition of music than it has ever been brought before.

All this, it seems to me, and granting his remarkable

sensibility, results from the fact that, more consistently than most painters, Mr. John reposes upon his craft. He has no prejudices either for or against the facts of nature, but takes them as they come according to his mood. Sometimes, as in his portraits, he paints realistically, but he is never a Realist in the sense of swearing by the facts for the impression of truth. He is content with the truth that comes of consistent drawing and painting.

This is not the place for a full-length study of Mr. John or of any other painter. What I want to emphasise is that Mr. John is "modern," not because he tries to be, but because he has made his art a flexible instrument which responds to the spirit of the times. He is, so to speak, a Post-Impressionist without knowing it. He tries to express neither his own personality nor the spirit of the times, and the result is that he expresses both to a remarkable degree.

CHAPTER XIII

POST-IMPRESSIONISM IN ENGLAND

IT may be necessary to repeat that the term "Post-Impressionism" is used in this book to include all the artistic movements and tendencies—Cubism, Expressionism, Futurism, Vorticism or whatever they may be called—that have appeared since Impressionism. They are all Post-Impressionistic in the double sense: as following Impressionism in time, and as being concerned with something behind the eye, with the mental conception rather than the visual impression. Since all art deals with mental conceptions, the heretical character of these movements or tendencies depends mainly on the degree to which they segregate the mental conception from the other elements included in Reynolds' "notion of nature"—just as the heretical character of Impressionism depends upon its segregation of the visual element.

All the movements named above have appeared in England. The excuse for them is, of course, the fact that the general reaction from Realism in every department of life has been felt here as much as on the Continent. Outside art it has been felt even more strongly; as is proved by the greater prevalence here of such phenomena as Christian Science, faith healing, and the various forms of spiritualism. Without going into controversial matters, it seems to me that there is a simple explanation of this in the existence here of so many

forms of Protestantism, that is to say, of rationalised religion. Over in France the choice is, broadly, between Catholicism and pure Rationalism. Protestantism is to Catholicism pretty much what Impressionism is to traditional art. There is the same objection to authority, the same appeal to the facts, and the same insistence upon individual judgment; together with a desire to keep the character of inspiration. It is, essentially, a half-way house between faith and reason. Nothing seems to me more natural than that the religious reaction from Realism in a Protestant country should take the forms I have indicated.

But before such a reaction can be expressed in an organised art like that of painting, it must find conventions or formulas. Such were suggested in France by Cézanne, Gauguin and Van Gogh, and developed theoretically by their followers. Over here, where the art of painting is less highly organised, the tendency has been to take them ready-made from France. So long as this were confined to technical expedients there would be no more to be said against it than against learning to paint in Paris; but, unfortunately, a good many of our young painters have taken inspiration as well. Or, rather, they have accepted the inspiration but tried to disclaim the expedients; as if they might be supposed to have got their emotions from France and their expedients from Heaven. The consequence is that a great deal of English Post-Impressionism has to be dismissed as mere imitation.

In a certain number of cases, however, the conventions and expedients of the French painters have been frankly adopted and applied to what may be called

native inspiration with very interesting results. Indeed, as I suggested before, it is not improbable that, in the long run, some of the methods of Post-Impressionism are better adapted to the English than the French artistic genius. For example, the effect of Cubism upon an extremely logical sense of form in France has resulted in a deadly progression of still-life pictures. Over here, where the sense of form is deficient, Cubism has had rather a bracing effect. This was admirably illustrated by the war paintings and drawings of Mr. C. R. W. Nevinson, in which the results of Naturalistic vision were reinforced by some insistence upon volume and energy.

One confessed link between French and English Post-Impressionism was provided by a little cosmopolitan group of painters working in France, including Mr. S. J. Peploe, Mr. J. D. Ferguson and Miss Anne Estelle Rice. These painters were associated particularly with the *Fauve* or *Fauviste* movement which, from its name, should have been sentimental rather than artistic in its origin; the idea suggested being that of the philosopher's advice to "live dangerously." But wherever or however derived, the artistic methods of the three painters I have named are effective for their purpose. They are before everything designers in paint in all three dimensions; and they have adopted a style of boldly simplified and rhythmical drawing, bright colour pattern, and obvious and well organised brushwork which gives to their works a singularly robust appearance. Their designs are emphatic and closely articulated, without any padding, and there is no hesitation in using a dark line instead of elaborate

light and shade to relieve the forms. Except that the character of paint is fully recognised, in both surface quality and style of drawing, the works of these artists rather recall the effects of stained glass.

Most of the English Post-Impressionists were originally associated with the London Group, which also included the Neo-Realists, as they called themselves, prominent among whom were Mr. Charles Ginner and the late Mr. Harold Gilman. Like most artistic labels, the word " Realist " is apt to lead to misunderstanding. Thus, my dictionary says : " One who endeavours to reproduce nature or describe real life just as it appears to him." That is to say, one who aims at reality in his art. But every artist, even the most romantic, aims at reality " just as it appears to him "; the difference is in the means adopted. On the whole it seems to me better to reserve the word Realist for the artist who makes use of realistic means ; using " Naturalist " as a more inclusive term for the artist who aims at reality by reproducing the facts of nature—irrespective of the means adopted. Or, to put it another way, Naturalism is an outlook, and Realism a method; since it is obvious that a Naturalistic painter may be either Romantic or Realistic in his method according to the facts of nature which seem to him to contain reality. But all these terms are unsatisfactory, and in this book they are only used for convenience. Even if they seem to reverse accepted views their intention will, I think, be clear. Except in colour, which they treated anything but realistically, the Neo-Realists were justified in their use of the label because it distinguished them from those members of the Group

who made use of formal expedients, such as Cubism, in order to get reality. Mr. Gilman, who died in 1919, was President of the London Group and the most accomplished painter among the Neo-Realists. So far as the treatment of form was concerned, he kept pretty close to the facts of nature ; but his colour was intensified with a decorative bias, and he gave the fullest expression to paint as a substance. Towards the end of his all too short career, as if conscious of the inevitable discrepancy between Realism and painting, he seemed to be following his instinct for the medium in the direction of a more formal design. Mr. Ginner is more definitely a designer to begin with. He is a Realist in the sense of avoiding distortion of the facts, but he puts a slight emphasis upon any formality that he finds in the subjects—generally "townscapes," which invite this treatment—and in both colour and surface he regards paint as a decorative substance.

A sort of link between the Neo-Realists and the more theoretically Post-Impressionistic members of the London Group—who have lately seceded to form "Group X"—is provided by a number of painters who, though they freely translate the facts of nature in favour of the medium, in form, colour and arrangement, keep on the Naturalistic side of abstract principles. Among them are Mr. Robert Bevan, Mr. Ethelbert White, Mr. Randolph Schwabe, Mr. Roger Fry, Mr. Adrian Allinson, Mr. Paul Nash, Mr. John Nash, Mr. Mark Gertler, Mr. Walter Taylor, Mr. D. Fox Pitt, Mr. Bernard Adeney, Mr. B. Meninsky, Mr. E. M. O'R. Dickey, Miss Thérèse Lessore, Miss Vanessa Bell, Miss Sylvia Gosse, Miss Ethel Sands,

and Mrs. S. de Karlowska. In several of these painters the influence would seem to be that of Cézanne, varying in degree from slight emphasis upon volume to something like Cubism. In others the approach to Post-Impressionistic principles seems to be by way of Neo-Impressionism. An interesting consequence of the renewed attention to design and frank recognition of paint is the revival at the hands of some of these painters of something like Pre-Raphaelitism; that is to say, pictures of everyday life, or even of "literary" subjects, in which the facts are represented with great detail, but without any attempt to create realistic illusion. The advantage of this tendency is that it enables English painters to indulge their natural interests without prejudice to the art of painting. At the same time it avoids the emptiness and the inverted sentimentality which almost invariably follow any attempt by an English artist to adopt an objective attitude to life and nature. It rescues the craft but allows full expression to the human being.

With the members of the London Group, who seem to take up a position midway between Naturalism and abstract principles, may be included Mr. C. R. W. Nevinson. He is an extremely competent painter, with a taste for experiment. His use of the expedients of Post-Impressionism seems to be determined by the character of the subject he happens to be painting, and they are always used intelligently. His war paintings were strengthened by a discreetly modified Cubism, and in other works he has at least alluded to the more pictorially possible principles of the Italian Futurists —the suggestion of force-lines and of the development

of objects in space, for example. Occasionally he has painted a crowd quite in the manner of Severini. On the whole, however, he prefers a full representation of the facts of nature with only such modifications as are indicated by the exigencies of painting. The truth seems to be that he is firmly enough grounded in his craft to be able to indulge in experiments to extend its resources without committing himself to any theory.

By far the most important of the more "advanced" English Post-Impressionists is Mr. Wyndham Lewis. He is the leader in Vorticism; the only movement since Pre-Raphaelitism of definitely native origin. Mr. Lewis is to Vorticism what Boccioni is to Italian Futurism; the brains of the movement, intellectual and critical to a fault. I am not prepared to say in a phrase what Vorticism is essentially. Mr. Lewis himself devoted some eight double-column, closely printed pages in the second number of *Blast*, the official organ of the movement, to defining its characteristics by comparison with other modern movements without giving a very clear account of the matter. To the unprejudiced observer, however, it would seem to be a domesticated and more intelligent form of Futurism. It avoids the intellectual mistakes and discrepancies of that movement, but shares a good many of its characteristics. As the very name of that engaging publication *Blast* indicates, it is as much sentimental as artistic in origin; since a person absorbed in purely artistic aims does not trouble to blast or bless anybody or anything but gets on with the business, generally in profound ignorance that he is doing anything new. Like Futurism, too, Vorticism includes literature—though not yet

music, I think—in its activities. The actual word "Vortex" is used by C. D. Carrà to describe the emotional condition of the Futurist artist, in his contribution to Boccioni's book. But apart from all this, the likeness of *Blast* to a Futurist manifesto, even in the matter of typographical expedients, is too close to be accidental.

This, however, is not to deny that Vorticism is a genuinely native movement. Not only that, but, as an artistic theory, it is more thoroughly digested and capable of more consistent application to drawing, painting and sculpture than Futurism. Its main principle would appear to be the imaginative reconstruction of nature in the work of art. For example, in his notes in *Blast*, Mr. Wyndham Lewis says: "The first reason for not imitating Nature is that you cannot convey the emotion you receive at the contact of Nature by imitating her, but only by becoming her. . . .The essence of an object is beyond and often in contradiction to its simple truth; and literal rendering in the fundamental matter of arrangement and logic will never hit the emotion intended by unintelligent imitation. . . . It is always the possibilities in the object, the imagination, as we say, in the spectator, that matters. Nature itself is of no importance. . . . The finest artists—and this is what Art means—are those men who are so trained and sensitized that they have a perpetually renewed power of doing what nature does, only doing it with all the beauty of accident, without the certain futility that accident implies."

No reflective person will quarrel with these assertions. They are, in fact, only an elaboration of what

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For Note see p. 261

Emerson meant when he said that " before a man can draw a tree properly he must have been a tree." But their artistic, as distinct from their theoretical value, depends entirely upon how they are applied to the actual *materials* of drawing, painting and sculpture; and it is here, it seems to me, that Vorticism fails. If we say that the finest artists have a perpetually renewed power of doing what Nature does *in and according to the ways of the particular material they happen to be using*, we shall get nearer to the truth. Whatever " Art" is or is not, painting is primarily and essentially the art of using paint, or, if you like, designing in paint. It is significant that the most satisfactory Vorticist designs are in drawing, woodcut or water-colour; that is to say, in mediums which lend themselves naturally to treatment in straight lines and angular patterns. Of course it is open to the Vorticists to say that such designs represent a higher form of art than designs based on curves. That may be; the only thing certain is that they represent a more universally popular form of art. Recent careful experiments by trained psychologists on subjects taken, apparently, at random, with the simplest elements of form, have demonstrated that, contrary to general belief, straight lines are more popular than curves. " All subjects except one preferred the straight lines to the arcs of circles, and three out of eight prefer the straight lines even to the circles also. The average order of popularity is as follows: First, circles, then straight lines, waving lines, the ellipse, and last the arcs of circles."* So that, leaving out the

* *An Introduction to the Experimental Psychology of Beauty.* By C. W. Valentine, M.A., D.Phil. (T. C. & E. C. Jack, Ltd., 1919).

question of subject, a design by Mr. Wyndham Lewis should have a wider appeal than a design based upon Hogarth's " line of Beauty and Grace."

What it amounts to is that the Vorticists have not yet found their equation in oil paint. Here, again, it is open to them to say—and Blake, at any rate, was of that opinion—that oil paint is a bad artistic material; but that is too much like a counsel of despair, and one, moreover, in opposition to the general attitude of the Vorticists towards the materials of the present day. Any consideration of oil paint, and of the tools with which it is handled, shows that its effective and expressive use is hindered in straight lines and rectangular patterns. Except the Expressionism of Kandinsky, reducing painting to a sort of musical arabesques, which Mr. Lewis rightly rejects, there is no technical alternative in oil paint to a free translation of the forms of nature. Not that the Vorticists exclude representation; the point is that the abstract framework of their oil paintings is too theoretical and not sufficiently determined by the nature of the substance. Not only that, but it is often accompanied by distortions and disproportions which have no reason in the medium or in the purpose of the design. They can only be called sentimental distortions.

Personally I believe that the future development of Vorticism will be along the lines indicated by Mr. Lewis's remark: " But I think a great deal of effort will automatically flow back into more natural forms from the barriers of the Abstract." But that is only another way of saying that it will cease to be theoretical Vorticism. It will, in short, become painting; as,

allowing for individual peculiarities and limitations, it is practised by such painters as Mr. Frank Brangwyn and Mr. Augustus John.

The most that can be said of Vorticism at present is that by regarding the question of representation or non-representation as irrelevant, and insisting upon the imaginative reconstruction of nature in formal designs as the aim of art, it has been a bracing influence in England. Among the more important of the artists associated with Mr. Wyndham Lewis in his ideas are Mr. William Roberts and Mr. Edward Wadsworth. With Miss Jessie S. Dismorr, Mr. Frank Dobson, Mr. Frederick Etchells, Mr. Charles Ginner, Mr. Cuthbert J. Hamilton, Mr. John Turnbull, and Mr. E. McKnight Kauffer, they form the new "Group X." which is, apparently, a secession of advanced elements from the London Group. In a book dealing with movements there is no need to discuss their individual peculiarities. They are all competent draughtsmen and painters, and their general aims are best described in the words of their leader: "They believe that the experiments undertaken all over Europe during the last ten years should be utilized directly and developed, and not be lightly abandoned or the effort allowed to relax."

CHAPTER XIV

CONCLUSION

THE question "What is Art?" may be insoluble, but the primary fact in painting is—paint. Therefore in the pages of this book I have insisted at the risk of tiresomeness on the importance of the medium. It seems to me that if we take in the full implications and consequences of paint we shall be some way towards answering the larger question. To his "notion of nature" as comprehending "not only the forms which nature produces, but also the nature and internal fabric and organisation, as I may call it, of the human mind and imagination" Reynolds might very well have added, "and the nature of the materials used by man." So far as the art of painting is concerned, however you look at it, that is the constant factor. A painter may or may not represent "the forms which nature produces"; he may or may not express "the nature and internal fabric and organisation of the human mind and imagination"; but, if he is a painter at all, he cannot avoid using paint.

Looked at in perspective, all artistic movements resolve themselves into digressions from painting. They are the efforts of an organised art to adapt itself to changing conditions and circumstances. The changes may be moral or material, intellectual or economical, and they are generally mixed; but, whatever they are, they are outside painting itself. The painter feels them,

possibly in greater degree, in the same way as his fellow creatures; but, as painter, he can only express them by, in and through his medium. Any attempt on his part to express them in any other way brings the movement into the region of heresy. Thus, during the nineteenth century, the change was in the direction of a closer attention to "the forms which nature produces." So long as painting remained true to itself the effort to adapt itself to this change was all very well; but there came a time when the function of the eye was separated from the other considerations involved in painting and cultivated for its own sake; and you had the heresy of Impressionism. Towards the close of the nineteenth century the change was in the direction of a closer attention to "the nature and internal fabric of the human mind and imagination." So long as painting remained true to itself the effort to adapt itself to this change was, equally, all very well; but there came a time, sooner in this case, when the functions of the mind were separated from the other considerations involved in painting and cultivated for their own sake; and we have the heresies of Post-Impressionism—Cubism, Expressionism, Futurism, Vorticism, or whatever you like to call them. In both cases the constant factor, paint itself, with its implications and consequences, was comparatively disregarded.

That, at any rate, is how it seems to me. It may seem ridiculous to say that the painter can pay too much attention to nature, but it is certainly true that he can pay too much attention to the "narrow principles of nature, separated from its effect on the human mind,"

and from the nature of paint ; and though it may seem ridiculous to say that the painter can think too much, it is certainly true that he can think too much away from his medium. In the long run the only seeing, thinking and feeling that are of any real consequence in painting are seeing, thinking and feeling in terms of paint. I am supported in this view by the fact that the extreme characteristics of any movement are seldom to be found in the best painters of the period in which it takes place. The characteristics are to be found in their works, but, being digested into the body of painting, they are less obvious.

In a book dealing with movements rather than men such painters are comparatively disregarded. Otherwise, in writing about painting in England at the present day, it would be ridiculous not to speak at length of such painters as Mr. John Sargent, Mr. George Clausen, Mr. D. Y. Cameron, Mr. Arnesby Brown, Mr. Philip Connard, Sir John Lavery, Mr. A. J. Munnings, Sir William Orpen, Mr. Charles Shannon, Mr. C. J. Holmes, Mr. Walter Russell, Mr. William Rothenstein, and Mr. Walter Bayes ; to take a selection of names almost at random from the catalogues of the Royal Academy and the New English Art Club. The point is that they are painters rather than " 'ists." Many of them show the digested influence of Impressionism, and several—notably Mr. C. J. Holmes and Mr. Walter Bayes—the digested influence of Post-Impressionism ; or at any rate of the ideas behind that movement ; but none of them can be regarded as a heretic from the traditions of painting.

Not that heretics have not their value—apart from

their convenience as illustrations! By straining the possibilities of painting in one direction or another they show what can and what cannot be done; and they generally succeed in doing a little more in that direction than was thought possible before. Not only that, but by their very excesses they warn the main body of painting when it has gone far enough in a particular direction. Thus, without the excesses of extreme Impressionism, the danger to painting of a too narrow conception of nature would not have become apparent. No doubt the reaction has gone too far the other way; but over-statement of forgotten truths has its uses. In relation to the main body of painting the heretics might be compared to scouts and skirmishers; less heavily armed, in the technical sense, but more alert than the others, falling back on the main body, as they often do, when their work of exploration is done.

It cannot have escaped a reflective observer that what we call "movements" in painting all fall within the history of painting in oils. So long as painters were limited to comparatively intractable materials they had no temptation to go outside their art. It was hard enough to be a painter. With fresco and to a less degree with tempera the difficulty was not to avoid the imitation of nature but to get anywhere near it. Consequently the larger "notion of nature" in painting was preserved automatically. One painter might be cleverer than another in imitating "the forms which nature produces," and another might have a keener sense of the "fabric and organisation" of the human mind; but in either case he was a painter or nothing. He could

not be considered an " artist " by virtue of his knowledge of nature or his ideas. But with the introduction of oil painting he had a dozen chances of distinction outside the technical mastery of his art. He could deceive the eye and mystify the imagination and indulge the emotions and tickle the senses, and get credit for all these things, without being more than an indifferent craftsman. The medium itself played up to his evasion of the difficulties of design.

How far this fatal facility of oil paint for purposes unconnected with art is to be looked upon as a blessing or a curse I am not prepared to say ; but it is significant that with a renewed sense of the importance of design there is an increasing disposition to paint in tempera. Sculpture is outside the province of this book, but it may be remarked that there is a similar disposition to discard white marble in favour of less tractable forms of native stone. Here, of course, the question of cost may apply ; but it seems to me that both tendencies are signs that what were once virtues of necessity are now recognised to be virtues essential to art. It is probable that both oil-paint and white marble had to be carried to the extreme limit of their capacity for imitating the forms of nature before the futility of that exercise was recognised. In the case of oil-paint, at any rate, the limit was reached when the medium itself began to protest ; as it does in the pictures of the extreme Impressionists, so that people say : " I can't see the picture for the paint." The reasonable view is that these two substances are not so much evils in themselves as extended resources throwing an increased responsibility upon the artist. The

greater the freedom the greater the need for discipline.

Incidentally, it may be remarked that Eastern art, which lacks these two substances, has avoided heresies. So far as we can judge it has always kept within a "notion of nature" which comprehends the facts of nature, the nature of mind, and the nature of the materials used in art. One phase of it has been more Realistic than another, but mainly in the matter of subject. A colour-print by Hokusai or Hiroshige may be more "actual" in subject than a painting by Korin, but it is hardly more Realistic in method. Undoubtedly, increased acquaintance with Eastern art has had a good effect upon Western painting; but there is a danger in that direction, too. Whether we like it or not, the third dimension of space is a craving of the Western mind; and Western art which, in its reaction from Realistic imitation, evades it, is shirking one of its problems and one of its opportunities. The same thing applies to the question of medium. In order to give a full account of himself and of his age, the Western painter will have to design in three dimensions and design in oil-paint.

I have avoided the words as long as possible, but it seems to me that what is happening now is that Western painting is in process of finding its "new synthesis"; a synthesis that will include the larger "notion of nature" peculiar to our times; the gains of the nineteenth century in truth to the forms which nature produces, including the nature of light, and the more recent and broader conception of the nature and internal fabric and organisation of the human mind and

imagination. Everything depends upon the completeness with which this new synthesis is translated into terms of painting. The hindrances to such translation at present are mainly over-consciousness of period and over-consciousness of personality. The disadvantage of the former is that it makes too much of accidents, which already belong to yesterday. This is well illustrated by the childish delight of the Futurists and Vorticists in machinery. We are still a long way from tapping the forces of nature directly, but the whole tendency of modern science is in that direction. That is to say, machinery becomes less and less " mechanical" as it develops ; as anybody can see who compares a " Tube " locomotive with the " Rocket." Already the " come and go of a piston in a cylinder," to quote one of the " plastic and pictorial elements " praised by Boccioni, strikes one as old-fashioned as the action of a beam-engine over a Cornish mine. It is the same with over-consciousness of personality. The inevitable result is to make too much of opinion—which is generally borrowed—and to exclude the deeper truths of conviction. The remedy for this over-consciousness in art is the same as that for self-consciousness in social behaviour; and it is implied in the old saying that a man must lose himself to find himself. There is no royal road to the expression of either period or personality in art ; it happens automatically when the man of his times is absorbed in craftsmanship.

ILLUSTRATIONS

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

J. M. W. TURNER, R.A.

JOSEPH MALLORD WILLIAM TURNER, R.A., was born in 1775. He is generally regarded as England's greatest artist, and is represented in all the principal galleries of the world. Under the terms of his will, the whole of the works remaining unsold at his death, amounting with drawings and sketches in colour and pencil to the enormous number of nearly 20,000, were bequeathed to the Trustees of the National Gallery " provided a room or rooms are added to the present National Gallery to be, when erected, called ' Turner's Gallery.' " Some of these works are in Trafalgar Square, and the rest are housed in the Turner Wing of the National Gallery of British Art, Millbank, completed in 1910 through the generosity of the late Sir Joseph Duveen and his son, Mr. J. J. Duveen. Turner painted in both oil and water-colour and made a great many drawings for reproduction in aquatint and mezzotint. His career may be divided into three main phases: topographical landscape; poetical Naturalism, in which truth to the facts of nature was combined with Classical form to a degree never equalled before; Impressionism, in which the chief concern was effects of light and atmosphere. Turner died in 1851.

" Crossing the Brook " was painted about 1815. By some critics it is considered one of Turner's greatest works, and it was a favourite of his own. As an illustration to this book it has the advantage of showing how Turner could adapt a natural scene to formal design without loss of truth and character.

CROSSING THE BROOK TURNER

THE HAY-WAIN CONSTABLE

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

JOHN CONSTABLE, R.A.

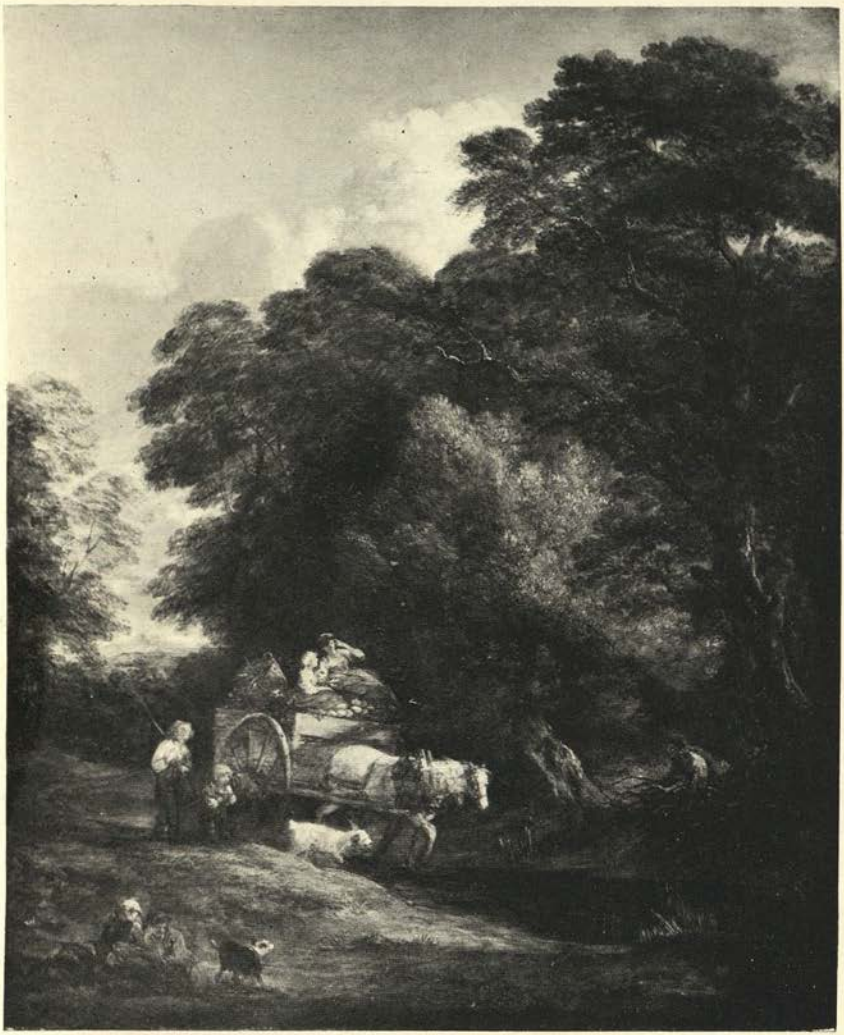
JOHN CONSTABLE, R.A., described as the "most genuine painter of English cultivated scenery, leaving untouched its mountains and lakes," was born in 1776 at Bergholt, Suffolk, where his father was a well-to-do miller. In 1799 he entered the schools of the Royal Academy, and exhibited there for the first time in 1802. Between that year and 1837 he exhibited one hundred and four pictures at the Royal Academy and thirty-two at the British Institution. Constable is fully represented in the National Gallery, the Tate Gallery, and the Victoria and Albert Museum. He was made A.R.A. in 1819, and R.A. in 1829, and died suddenly in 1837.

"The Hay-Wain" is a famous picture for several reasons. Not only is it one of Constable's best works, but it serves particularly well to distinguish his aims in landscape from those of Turner. Comparison of "The Hay-Wain" with "Crossing the Brook," for example, shows that Constable was much less formal in design and much more direct in the representation of nature. It was this picture, too, which definitely influenced the ideas of contemporary French landscape painters. Exhibited in the Salon held in the Louvre in 1824, it was awarded a Gold Medal and established Constable's reputation on the Continent. If the tendencies in painting which developed into Impressionism could be attributed to the influence of a single picture, "The Hay-Wain" might be called the fountain-head of the movement.

THOMAS GAINSBOROUGH, R.A.

THOMAS GAINSBOROUGH, R.A., was born in 1727 at Sudbury, in East Anglia. It has been said that at twelve he "was a confirmed painter." As early as 1744 he took a studio in Hatton Garden and set up as a portrait and landscape painter, but soon had to return home, where he married young and went to live at Ipswich. Here he prospered by his art, and in 1774 he was established in London as the rival of Reynolds. Gainsborough was one of the thirty-six original Academicians, and contributed to the first exhibition in 1769 and thenceforward regularly until 1783, when he ceased to exhibit on account of a misunderstanding about hanging. He is said to have painted about 700 portraits and 200 landscapes. He died in 1788.

"The Market Cart" has been chosen as an illustration to this book because it shows the transition between Classical or formal landscape and the Naturalism of Constable. The facts of nature are represented fairly closely, and the design is comparatively informal, but there is no attempt to avoid a "stylish" treatment.



THE MARKET CART GAINSBOROUGH

THE PORINGLAND OAK JOHN CROME

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

JOHN CROME

JOHN CROME, commonly called Old Crome, was born at Norwich in 1768. He received his earliest training in the humble but sound school of coach and sign-painting. Then he became a drawing master, and between 1806 and 1818 he exhibited thirteen pictures at the Royal Academy. In 1803, with friends and pupils, he formed the Norwich Society, which may be regarded as the origin of the Norwich School of Painting. Crome died in 1821. On the day of his death he said to his son : " John, my boy, paint, but paint for fame ; and if your subject is only a pigsty, dignify it ! " His last words were : " Hobbema, my dear Hobbema, how I have loved you ! "

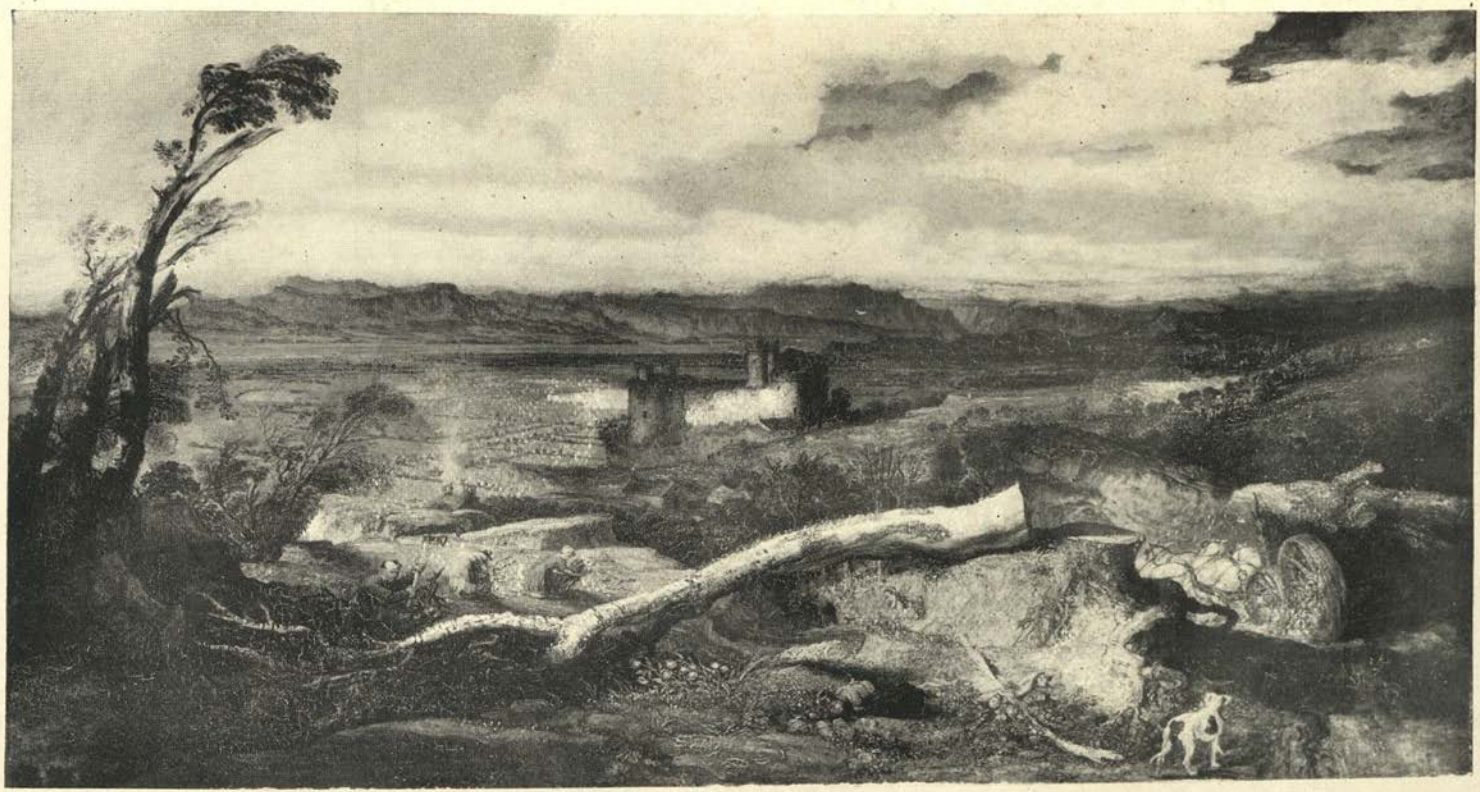
" The Poringland Oak," painted about 1818, well shows Crome's debt to Hobbema. It has the breadth which is obtained not by the optical methods of Impressionism but by mental grasp of the subject. There is an advance in Naturalistic truth, but the character of the tree as an organism is not lost in the effect.

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

JAMES WARD, R.A.

JAMES WARD, R.A., was born in Thames Street, London, in 1769. He was trained as an engraver, first with J. R. Smith and then with his brother, William Ward. In his earliest paintings he adopted the style of his brother-in-law, George Morland, and some of his pictures are said to have been sold as the work of that artist. About 1796 Ward was commissioned by the President of the Royal Agricultural Society "to paint a high-bred cow" and thenceforward he devoted himself almost entirely to animal painting. He is represented in the National Gallery and in the Tate Gallery. Ward was made an Associate of the Royal Academy in 1807 and a full member in 1811. He died in 1859.

"Harlech Castle and surrounding landscape" is typical of the fulness of subject interest in English landscape painting. A large view is taken, and all the details and episodes—human figures, horses and natural features—seem to have been painted for their own sakes. Yet in spite of this multiplicity of interests the whole is very well combined.



HARLECH CASTLE

JAMES WARD

THE BENT TREE

COROT

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

J. B. C. COROT

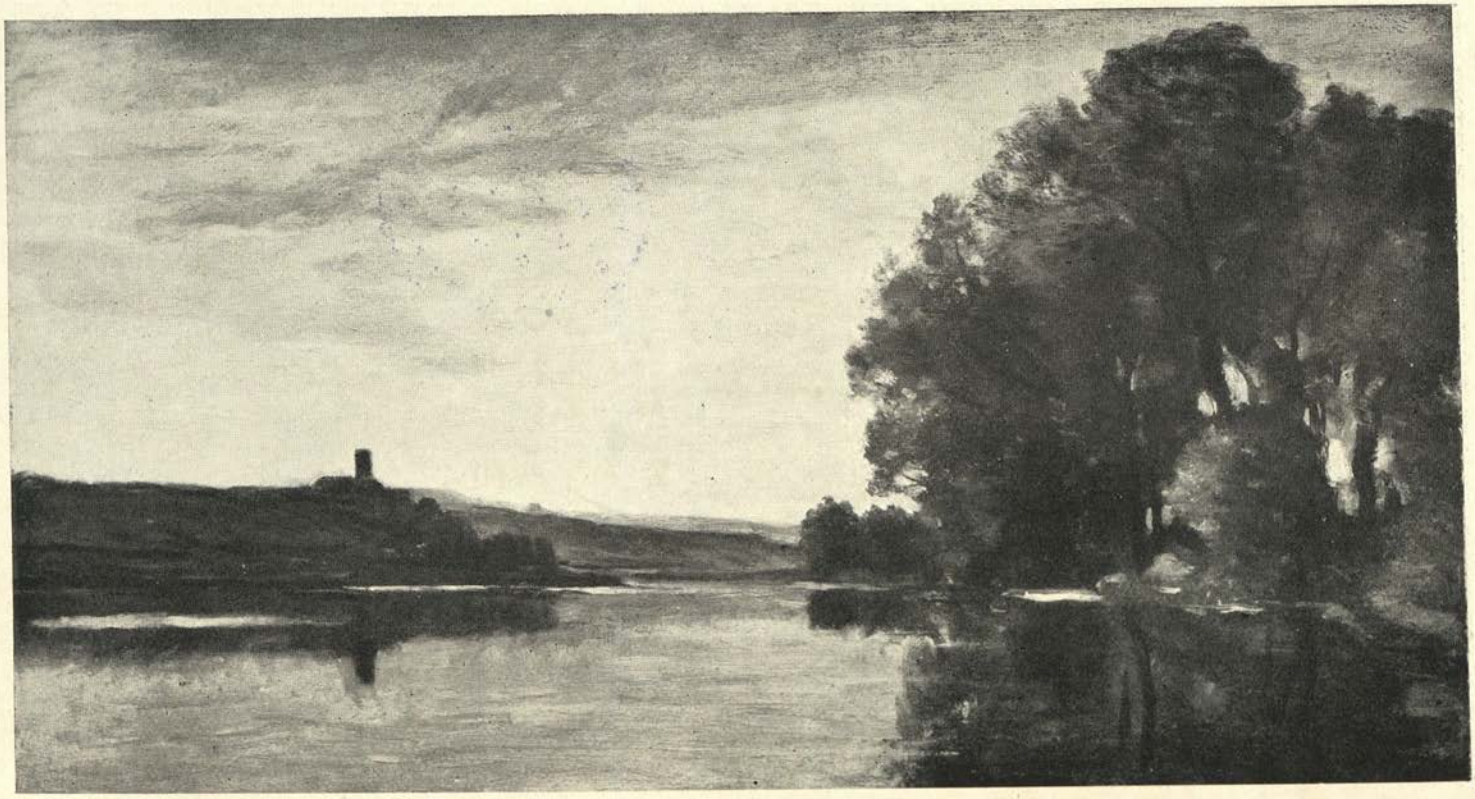
JEAN BAPTISTE CAMILLE COROT was born in Paris in 1796. He began life as a draper, but abandoned commerce at the age of twenty-five, and exhibited for the first time in 1827. Many of his earlier pictures were painted in Italy, in the Classical tradition of Claude and Poussin, and they are remarkable for firmness of design and depth of sentiment. His later and more familiar manner was developed in France, where he broadened his style with particular attention to atmospheric effect. Though Corot painted at Fontainebleau, and is generally regarded as belonging to the "Barbizon school," the association was in spirit rather than in fact. His more characteristic works are independent of time and place. Besides landscapes, he painted some important figure subjects. Corot is well represented in the Louvre, and fairly well in the National Gallery. He died in 1875.

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

THEODORE ROUSSEAU

THEODORE ROUSSEAU was born in 1812, in Paris, where his father was a small merchant tailor. He was always fond of drawing, and his early employment as bookkeeper at a saw-mill in the forests of Franche-Comte turned his attention to that type of scenery. He exhibited at the Salon for the first time in 1834. During the previous year he had seen Constable's "Hay-Wain," and there can be no doubt that it influenced him profoundly. In temperament, however, Rousseau would seem to have been more akin to John Crome, particularly in view of the latter's descent from the Dutch landscape painters of the seventeenth century. In the landscapes of Rousseau there is an emphasis upon structure and character that is comparatively lacking in the work of Constable. In pure landscape, depending entirely upon the facts of nature, without the introduction of the "visionary gleam," Rousseau may be looked upon as the leader of the Barbizon group. He died in 1867.

THE OLD OAK TREE — TH. ROUSSEAU



CHATEAU GUILLARD

C. F. DAUBIGNY

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

C. F. DAUBIGNY

CHARLES FRANÇOIS DAUBIGNY was born in Paris, of a family of artists, in 1817. He studied under Delaroche, and exhibited at the Salon for the first time in 1838. Daubigny travelled in Italy and in England, where he came at the invitation of Lord Leighton in 1866, and it is probable that he was directly influenced by the work of Constable. At any rate, there is considerable similarity between the two painters, though Daubigny was more definitely a designer. He might be described as the least romantic of the Barbizon painters, though he was keenly susceptible to the poetry of nature as contained in the facts. Daubigny, who is represented in the National Gallery by five small pictures, including a view of " St. Paul's," died in 1878.

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

J. B. JONGKIND

JOHAN BARTHOLD JONGKIND was born at Latdorp, near Rotterdam, in 1819. He studied first at the Hague and then on the receipt of a pension in 1845, he settled in France, though he frequently returned to Holland and continued to paint Dutch subjects, often from memory. Jongkind was highly estimated by his French contemporaries, who bought many of his pictures. He was a close friend of Boudin, and he forms an interesting link not only between the French and Dutch schools of landscape painting, but between the Barbizon group and the earlier Impressionists. With a strong hold upon the reality of solid objects, and great care in composition, his work shows a keener appreciation of light and atmosphere than was common at his period. It might be said to show Impressionism in the making. Jongkind died in 1891.

" Intérieur du Port de Rotterdam " is very characteristic of the style and aims of the painter. It is full of light and air, but the treatment of the buildings and boats is much more solid and definite than one associates with Impressionism. It represents, in fact, a half-way stage between Naturalism and Impressionism proper ; the interest of the painter being balanced between the character of the facts and the conditions of light and atmosphere in which they are seen.

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INTÉRIEUR DU PORT DE ROTTERDAM J. B. JONGKIND

ARGENTEUIL

EDOUARD MANET

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

EDOUARD MANET

EDOUARD MANET was born in Paris in 1832. His father was a magistrate, and he himself was destined for the Bar ; but, after some opposition on the part of his family, he was allowed to enter the studio of Couture. His early work was dominated by the influence of the Spanish painters, notably Velazquez and Goya. In 1863 Manet exhibited his " Luncheon on the Grass," a modern pic-nic party including a nude figure. It was rejected by the Salon, but finally found a home in the Louvre, where Manet is also represented by " Olympia," a splendidly drawn nude figure of a woman on a divan, with a negress bringing flowers. Manet was equally famous as a painter of the figure and of landscape. He is represented in the National Gallery by two fragments from his " Execution of the Emperor Maximilian." Though it is doubtful if Manet ever called himself an Impressionist, he used the word " impression " to describe one of his pictures in 1867, and he was closely associated with the group of painters who initiated what is now known as the Impressionist movement. Manet received medals from the Salon, and the cross of the Legion of Honour in 1882. He died the following year.

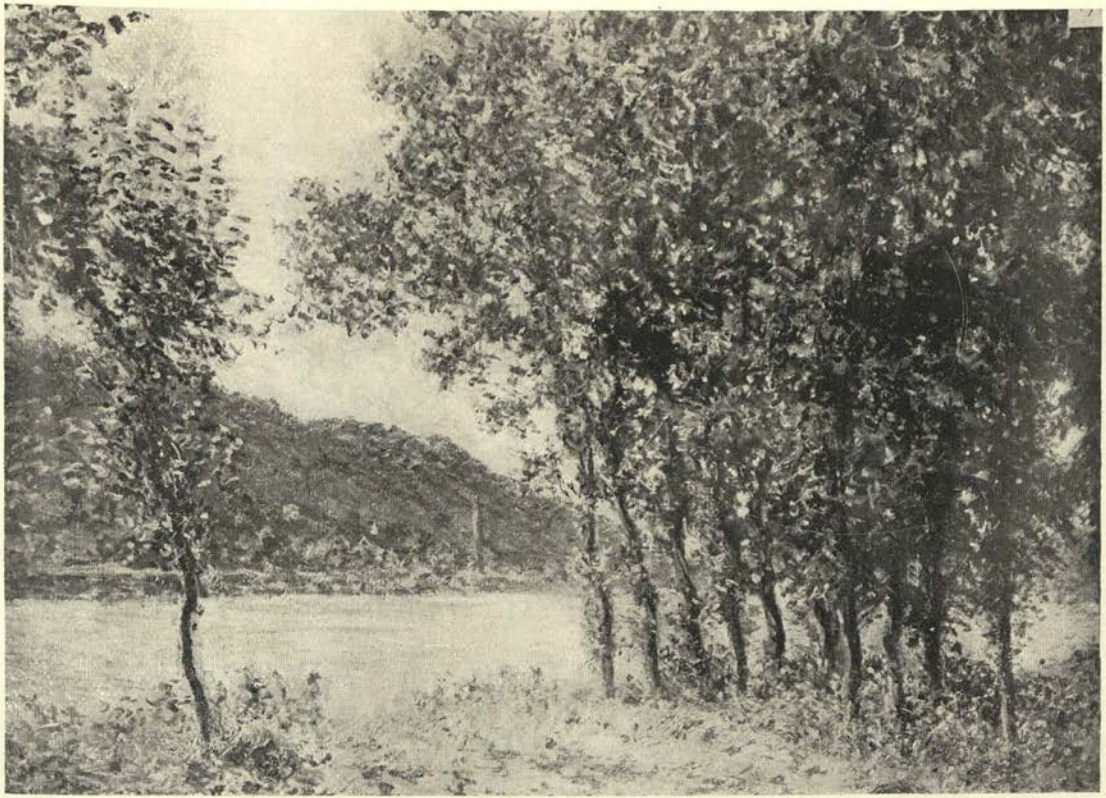
" Argenteuil " shows to advantage Manet's system of painting by values ; the reduction of the appearances of nature to broad patches of tone which determine the position of the object in space by their degrees of light and dark. The design is informal, the drawing taken for granted. Nothing is allowed to hinder the free play of the brush in building up the picture.

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

CLAUDE OSCAR MONET

CLAUDE OSCAR MONET was born in Paris, where his father was a merchant, in 1840. His childhood was spent at Havre, where he was encouraged in painting by Boudin and Jongkind, both of whom may be said to have prepared the way for Impressionism. Having completed his military service in Algeria, he came in contact with certain painters of the Barbizon group and developed under the influence of Corot. During the siege of Paris (1870-71) he visited England, and was greatly impressed with the works of Constable and Turner. From this artistic ancestry Monet developed the methods which entitle him to be called the " father of Impressionism." He carried the pitch of painting into a higher key than ever before, eliminated all browns from the palette, and employed only pure colours laid side by side in small broken touches to suggest the vibration of light. Above all, Monet insists on consistency of illumination at particular hours of the day or season ; and with this object he early adopted the habit of painting the same subject under different conditions of light. In this way he has painted a whole collection of series : " Haystacks," " Poplars," " Cathedrals," " Water-lilies," and " Views of the Thames." Monet, who is represented in the Louvre by several pictures, is still alive.

" Paysage à Villez près Vernon " is a typical Monet. It shows his direct concern with light ; the features of the landscape being subordinated to the illumination which falls upon them ; and also his method of painting with broken touches.



PAYSAGE À VILLEZ PRÈS VERNON — CLAUDE MONET

DANSEUSES AU FOYER DEGAS

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

EDGAR HILAIRE GERMAIN DEGAS

Edgar Hilaire Germain Degas, who signed himself simply "Degas," was born in Paris in 1834. The draughtsman of the Impressionist movement, his early work was in the severe tradition of Ingres. His very first picture in the Salon, "War Scene in the Middle Ages," exhibited in 1865, was in pastel; and he continued to make use of that medium during the whole of his life. Whether from curiosity or with satirical intention, Degas devoted himself almost exclusively to the aspects of contemporary urban life that are associated with expensive pleasure or squalid labour. Of all the Impressionists he was most in sympathy with Zola's conception of realism. Degas made a special study of the turf, and other favourite subjects of his were ballet dancers in all the conditions of their life, and washerwomen at their work and toilet. He painted a number of portraits, several of Manet among them, and worked in etching, aquatint and lithography as well as in oils and pastel. He is represented in the Louvre and in many of the great private collections in England and America. He died in 1917.

"Danseuses au Foyer" is a typical Degas subject. It shows the unexpectedness and arresting character of his composition, and his mastery of drawing. One would almost say that the attitudes of the dancers had been chosen for their difficulty of representation; and yet everything is done with apparently careless ease.

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

AUGUSTE RENOIR

Auguste Renoir was born at Limoges in 1841. His father was a small tailor, and at the age of thirteen Auguste began to earn his living as a painter on porcelain. Thrown out of employment by the introduction of machinery, he took to painting window blinds, and in a few years had saved enough money to become a pupil of Gleyre, in whose studio he came in contact with Monet, Sisley, and other painters who were afterwards associated with him in the Impressionist group. After one or two unsuccessful attempts he was represented in the Salon of 1865 by two pictures. In 1874 he contributed six pictures to the exhibition at Nadar's, in the Boulevard des Capucines, which is generally quoted as the opening manifesto of the Impressionist movement. One of these pictures was the portrait of " Madame Charpentier," which is now in the Metropolitan Museum of New York. To the same place belongs his " Madame Charpentier and her Children," and he is represented in the Louvre by " Le Moulin de la Galette " or " The Ball at Montmartre." Renoir painted women, children, fruit, flowers and landscape with equal and intense enjoyment. He was decorated in 1900, and died in 1919.

" La Petite Bûcheronne " is a charming example of his art. It shows to advantage his unaffected appreciation of natural beauty and his unembarrassed freedom in translating it into paint. The child seems to have grown out of the natural play of the brush, and the result is a unity of impression which could hardly have been obtained by any other means.

LA PETITE BÛCHERONNE — AUGUSTE RENOIR

FAISEUSE D'HERBE CAMILLE PISSARRO

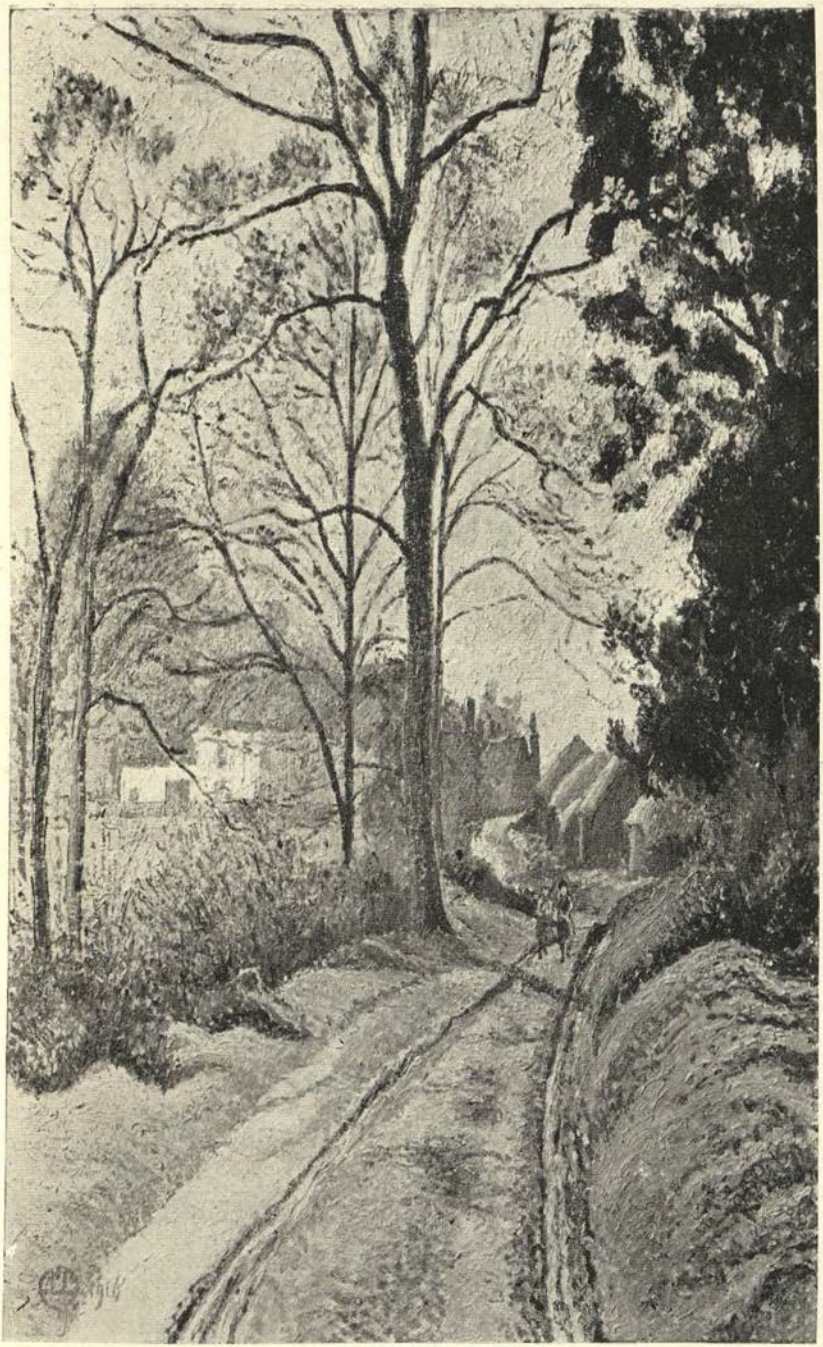
CAMILLE PISSARRO

CAMILLE PISSARRO was born at St. Thomas in the Danish West Indies in 1830. In 1855 his parents came to Paris, and Pissarro, who had already shown a talent for painting, came into contact with Corot and also with Monet and other painters who were to form the Impressionist group. His earlier work shows the influence of Corot, but he soon began to experiment in the direction of Impressionism, and a visit with Monet to London in 1871, when he saw the works of Turner, confirmed his ideas. Pissarro contributed to the famous Impressionist exhibition at Nadar's in 1874. About 1880 he was initiated by Seurat into the method of divisionism. He practised it methodically for some time, but eventually adopted a broader manner though still retaining the general principle of divided colour. After 1896 an affection of the eyes compelled him to work indoors ; and he painted a remarkable series of street and harbour scenes from windows. Pissarro died in 1903. A memorial exhibition of his works was held at the Leicester Galleries in 1920. Three sons and a grand-daughter of Pissarro are well-known artists working in London.

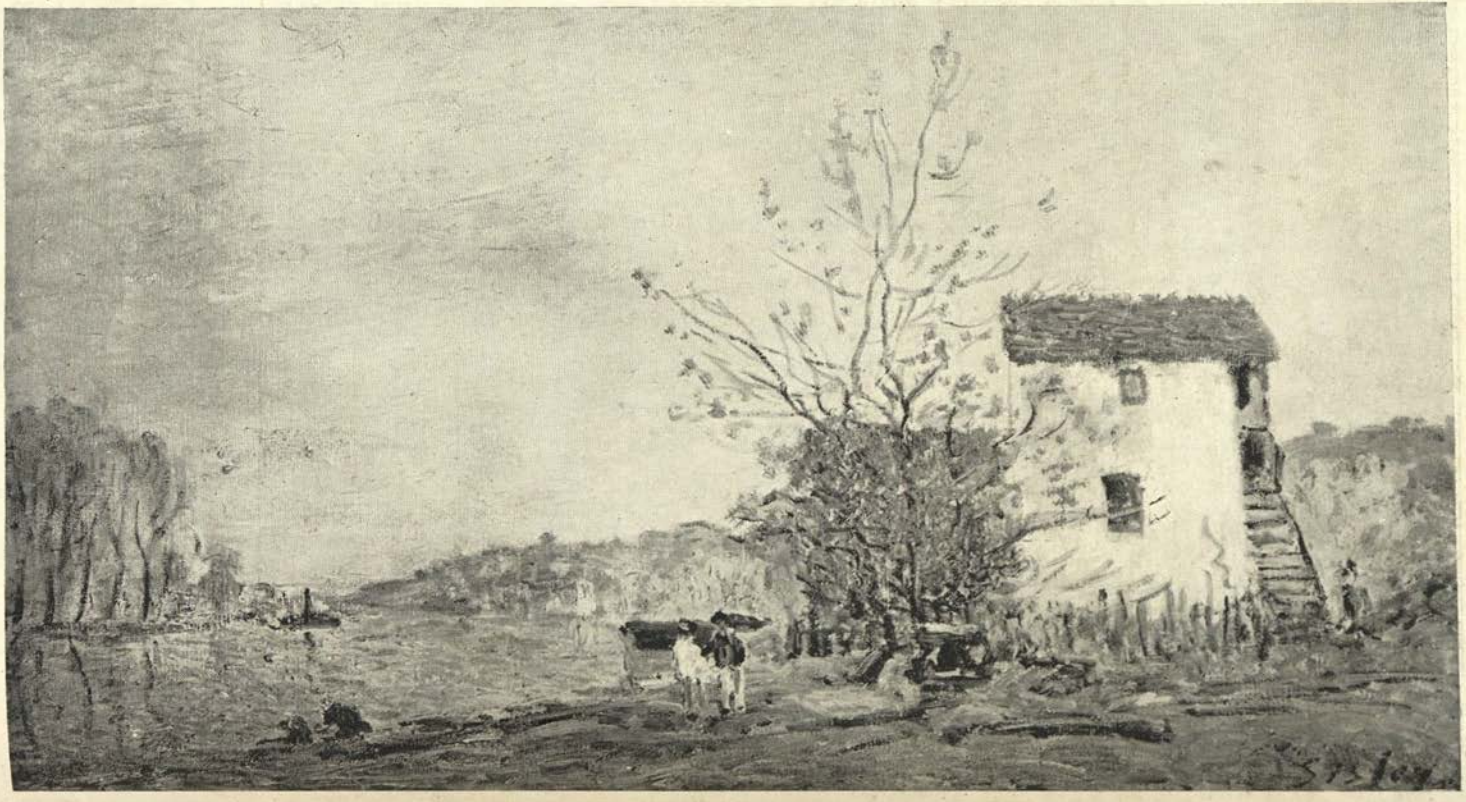
LUCIEN PISSARRO

LUCIEN PISSARRO, eldest son of Camille Pissarro, was born in Paris in 1863. He studied with his father, and never attended any art school. Growing up in close contact with all the Impressionists, from Manet to Cézanne, he exhibited for the first time in the last combined exhibition of the group. After several visits to England, he finally settled in this country in 1893. He is equally well known as a painter and as a producer of beautiful books, both as wood-engraver and as printer; a field of art in which his gifts as a designer find full play. Lucien Pissarro is a member of the New English Art Club. He is represented in the Leeds Corporation Gallery, and examples of his work have been bought by the Contemporary Art Society for the nation.

"Crockhurst Lane, Coldharbour," illustrates both Lucien Pissarro's fidelity to the general aims of the Impressionists and his peculiar talent as a designer. The atmospheric conditions are completely realised, but the decorative pattern is more definite than it is in the works of most of the older Impressionists.



CROCKHURST LANE LUCIEN PISSARRO



LE LOING À MORET — ALFRED SISLEY

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

ALFRED SISLEY

ALFRED SISLEY was born in Paris, of English parents, in 1839. He studied first under Gleyre, and was afterwards influenced by Corot and later associated with Monet and Renoir. He painted in England as well as in France, but principally at Moret-sur-Loing. His work, which found little appreciation in his life-time, illustrates a subtle and personal application of the general principles of Monet, with particular reference to the changes of light at different hours of the day. Sisley died in 1899. He is represented in the Louvre.

" Le Loing à Moret " gives a good idea of his delicate powers. It shows extreme sensibility to effects of light with but little regard for the facts of structure. Such a picture helps to explain the popular association of Impressionism with slightness.

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

BERTHE MORISOT

BERTHE MORISOT was born in 1845. A great-grand-daughter of Fragonard, she deserves a special place in the history of Impressionism because, with remarkable technical powers, she gave it a purely feminine turn. She married Eugène, the brother of Edouard Manet, whose work she did much to make popular. Berthe Morisot was as remarkable for her beauty as for her intelligence. To quote M. Camille Mauclair: "Normandy coast scenes with pearly skies and turquoise horizons, sparkling Nice gardens, fruit-laden orchards, girls in white dresses with big flower-decked hats, young women in ball-dress and flowers, are the favourite themes of this artist, who was the friend of Renoir, of Degas and of Mallarmé." She died in 1895.

THE SISTERS BERTHE MORISOT

MOTHER AND CHILD MARY CASSATT

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

MARY CASSATT

MARY CASSATT was an American living in Paris, who became closely associated with the Impressionist group. She was advised by Degas, and, like him, did a great deal of her work in pastel. M. Camille Mauclair, in "The French Impressionists," translated by Mr. P. G. Konody, says: "Miss Cassatt is the painter and psychologist of babies and young mothers, whom she likes to depict in the freshness of an orchard, or against backgrounds of the flowered hangings of dressing-rooms, amidst bright linen, tubs and china, in smiling intimacy."

JOSEF ISRAELS

JOSEF ISRAELS was born at Groningen, of Jewish parents, in 1824. He is justly regarded as the father of the modern Dutch school of painting. After studying with Kruseman, at Amsterdam, he went to Paris to the studio of Picot, and finally worked under Delaroche. His earlier pictures, historical and romantic subjects, gave little indication of his future development as an interpreter of the Jewish race and of the lives of fisherfolk. His interest in the last dated from about 1856, when he went to Zandvoort, near Haarlem, to recruit after an illness. For the Dutch fisherfolk Israels did pretty much what Millet did for the Barbizon peasants ; interpreting all their joys and sorrows and illustrating the hardship of their labour. His pictures of Jewish life resemble those of Rembrandt in their sympathy and understanding. In style, too, his work recalls that of that master in its breadth of light and shade and emotional looseness of handling. Besides painting in oil and water-colour, Israels was famous as an etcher. He was an Honorary Foreign Member of the Royal Academy, and is represented in the National Gallery by two pictures : " The Philosopher " and " The Shipwrecked Mariner." He died in 1911.

THE SEAMSTRESS JOSEF ISRAELS

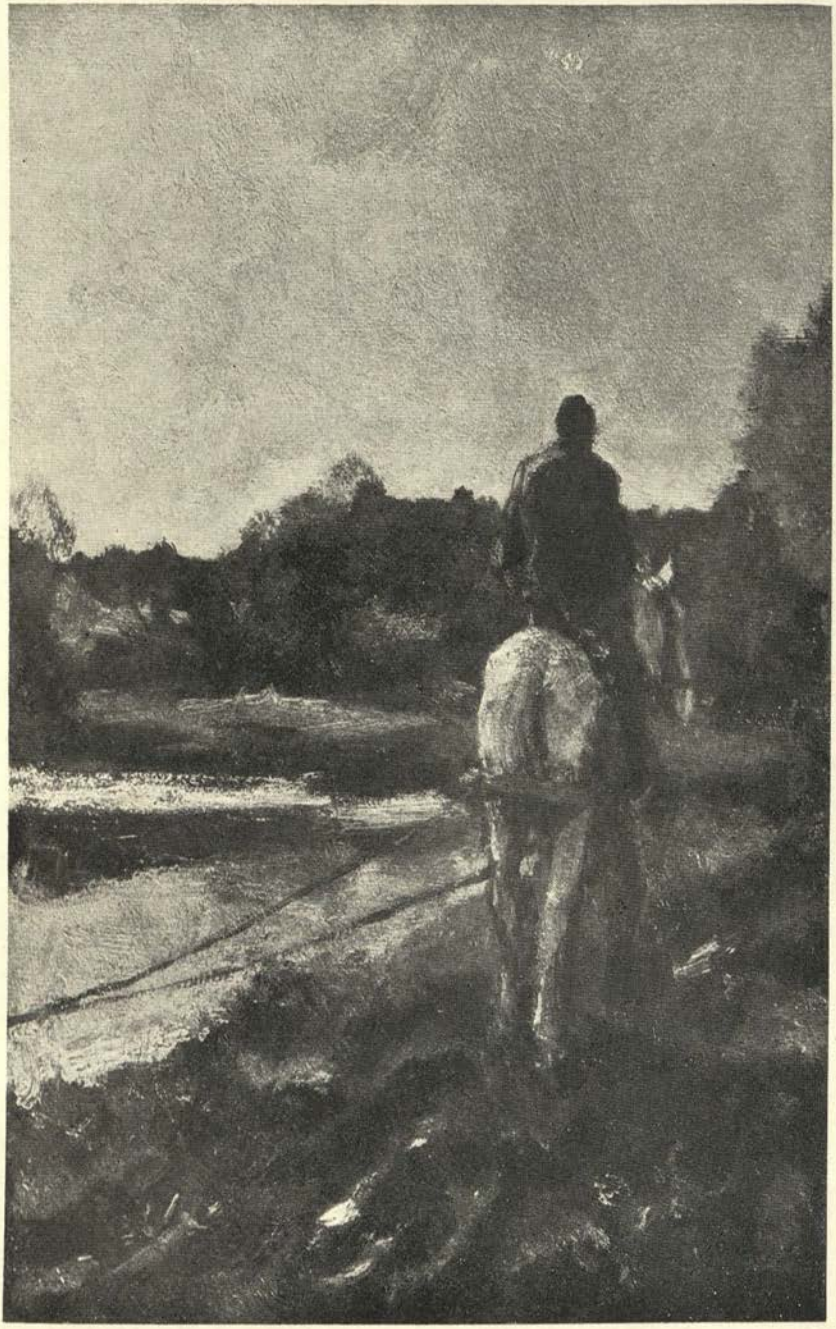
THE GIRL AT THE WELL MATTHEW MARIS

MATTHEW MARIS

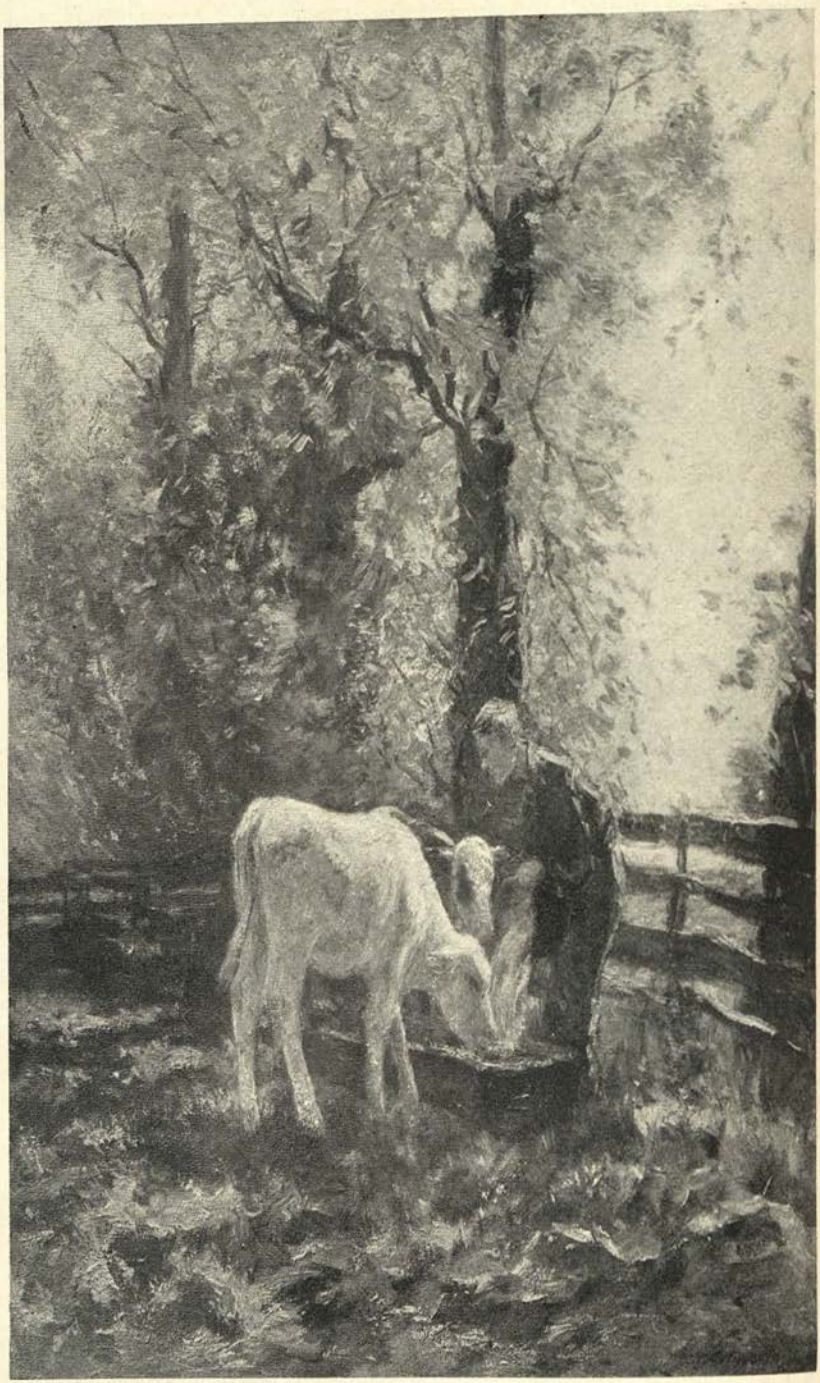
MATTHEW MARIS, the second of the three brothers of that name, was born at The Hague in 1839. At first he followed his elder brother, Jacob, or James, but he soon began to develop his peculiar subjective tendency. Having received a pension from Princess Marianne in 1857, he went with James to the Antwerp Academy. After living in Paris for some time he settled in London, living a very solitary life, and refusing to send to any exhibition after one of his pictures had been refused. Besides paintings in oil and water-colours, some of which are privately owned in this country, Matthew Maris produced some beautiful etchings. He died in London in 1917. After his death a memorial exhibition of his works was held at the French Gallery, Pall Mall. He is represented in the National Gallery by a small canvas, " Montmartre."

JACOB MARIS

JACOB, or JAMES, MARIS, the eldest of the three brothers of that name, was born at The Hague in 1837. His earliest pictures were in the tradition of the Dutch School, but as a result of a visit to Paris, and contact with the Barbizon painters, he broadened his style, though he continued to paint Dutch subjects. Jacob Maris is represented in the National Gallery by two pictures : " Mother and Child " and " The Drawbridge." He died in 1899.



THE TOWING PATH JACOB MARIS



THE AFTERNOON MEAL WILLEM MARIS

WILLEM MARIS

WILLEM MARIS, the youngest of the three brothers of that name, was born at The Hague in 1844. Trained by his brothers, by Jacob in particular, he developed much further in the direction of Impressionism. His chief interest in landscape was play of light; and when, as he generally did, he introduced cattle or ducks, he placed them near or in water, so that he might get the benefit of ripples and reflections. So far as subject-matter is concerned, his pictures are the essence of Impressionism, though he did not adopt any theoretical treatment of light. Willem Maris, who is represented in the National Gallery by a picture of "Ducks," died in 1910.

ANTON MAUVE

ANTON MAUVE was born at Zaandam in 1838. After studying with Van Os, Bilders and Verschuur, who made him a good workman in the style of the old Dutch animal painters, he met Willem Maris and broadened his methods in general sympathy with what is known as "the School of The Hague." His temperament, however, was more poetical than that of any of the others excepting Matthew Maris, and there is an affinity between his work and that of Corot. Mauve painted chiefly pastoral subjects. He died in 1888. He is represented in the National Gallery by a small canvas, "Watering Horses."

THE TIMBER WAGGON — ANTON MAUVE

LA BAIGNADE

GEORGES SEURAT

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

GEORGES SEURAT

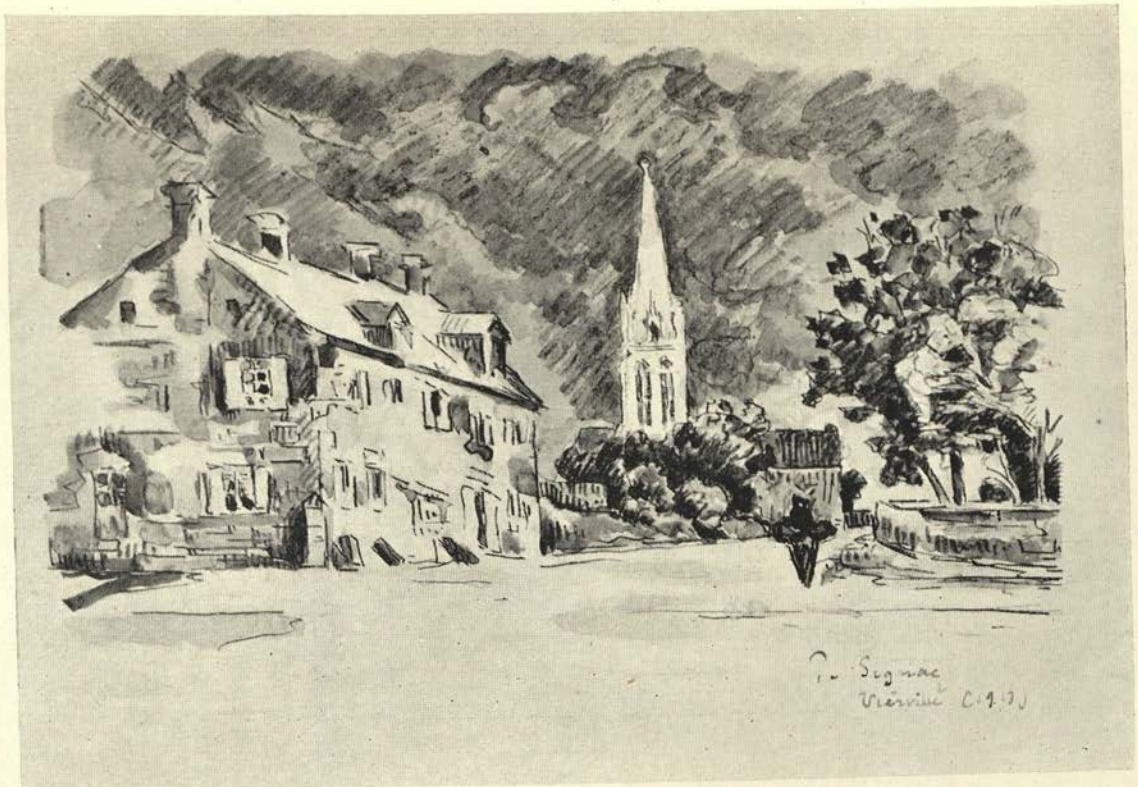
GEORGES SEURAT is generally regarded as the originator of " divisionism " as a scientific theory of painting. As described in the text, he got the hint from some experiments undertaken by Professor Rood, of Columbia University. At an exhibition of the Impressionist group in 1886, Seurat was represented by a picture entitled " Un Dimanche à la Grande-Jatte," in which the principle of divisionism was employed, and works similar to it in technique were shown by Camille and Lucien Pissarro and Paul Signac. The Impressionists generally, however, used the principle only in a more or less rule of thumb way to increase the illusion of light, particularly in fugitive or instantaneous effects ; its theoretical development was peculiar to the Neo-Impressionists, including Seurat, Signac and Van Rysselberghe. According to Signac, in " D'Eugène Delacroix au Neo-Impressionnisme " (Revue Blanche, 1898), they " aim at permanence of effect and reach their results by reflection, based on scientific principles," with special reference to design. Seurat died in 1890.

" La Baignade " is obviously the work of a designer. Whether from the point of view of spacing, tone relations or brushwork, everything is aimed at producing a direct emotional effect, apart from the meaning of the subject. Seurat used the same scene in a picture of young men bathing, reproduced in Mr. Caffin's book, *The Story of French Painting*, from which the above definition of Neo-Impressionist aims is quoted.

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

PAUL SIGNAC

PAUL SIGNAC is the apostle of Neo-Impressionism, which he and Georges Seurat may be said to have invented in the eighties. According to Signac : " By means of the suppression of all impure mingling, by the exclusive use of the optical mingling of the pure colours, it guarantees a maximum of luminosity, coloration and harmony, which have not yet been attained." In the hands of Signac the method is applied to landscapes and portraits in which the forms of nature though simplified are not distorted.



VIERVILLE

PAUL SIGNAC

d 3

OISEAU BLEU MAURICE DENIS

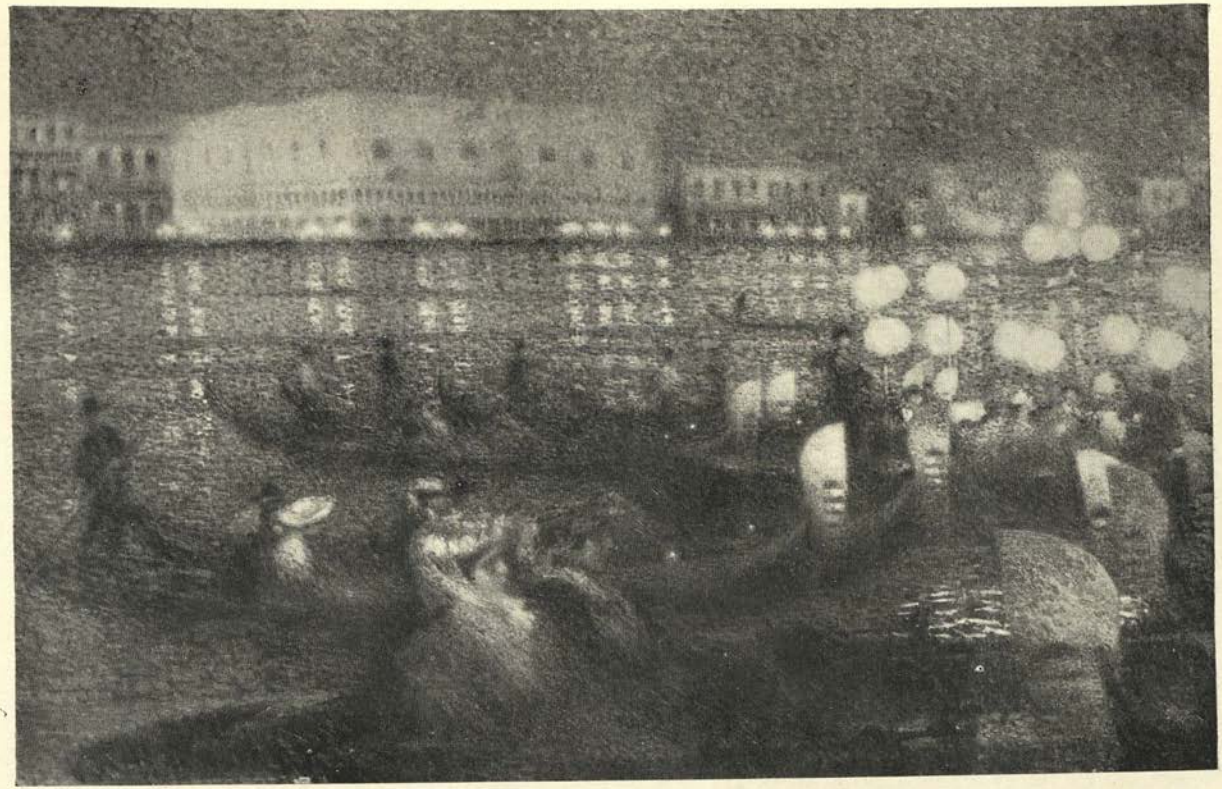
MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

MAURICE DENIS

MAURICE DENIS was born at Granville, Manche, in 1870. A pupil of Gauguin, he was one of the members of the Salon of the Rosy Cross, and for a time pursued the methods of Neo-Impressionism. His intense love of the Italian Primitives, however, led him to develop a more broadly decorative manner, akin to that of Puvis de Chavannes, in compositions of the figure in landscape in which the forms are clearly outlined in a rhythmical style of drawing and filled in with flat colours. Maurice Denis, who has decorated several churches, has been described as " almost a French Pre-Raphaelite."

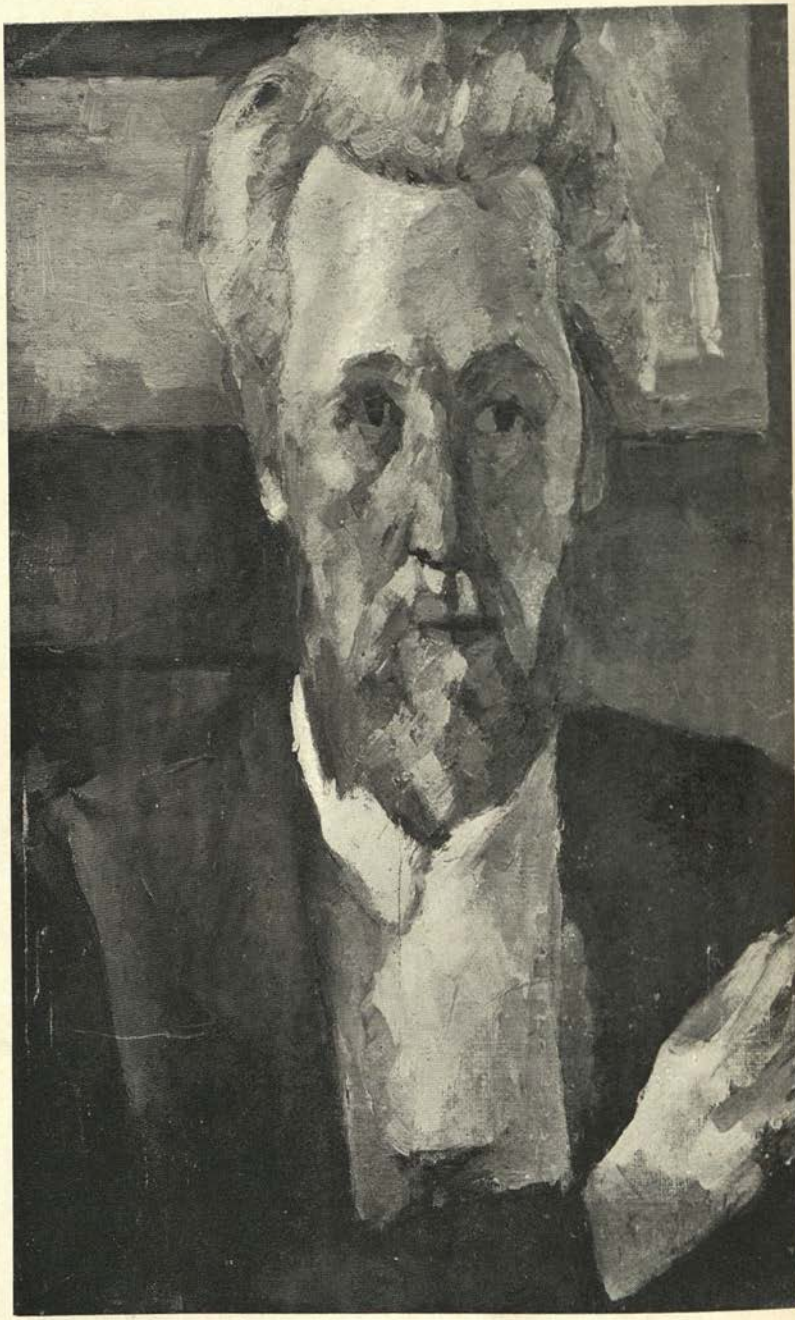
HENRI LE SIDANER

HENRI LE SIDANER was born in the island of Mauritius in 1862. A pupil of Cabanel's, he began as a Realist, but soon developed a subjective manner in which the methods of divisionism are used for their purely æsthetic value in bringing out the poetry of common things. He is fond of painting subjects in which still life plays an important part, and street scenes by twilight. Le Sidaner was decorated in 1906. He is represented in the Luxembourg by " The Table," and in Ghent by a similar subject. His pictures, of which " Musique sur l'eau ; le soir, Venise," is a typical example, are very popular outside France. There are examples at Belfast, Dublin, Ottawa, Johannesburg, and in the Carnegie Institute, Pittsburg. Le Sidaner has worked a great deal in the neighbourhood of Dunkirk.



MUSIQUE SUR L'EAU

HENRI LE SIDANER



PORTRAIT DE CHOQUEL PAUL CEZANNE

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

PAUL CEZANNE

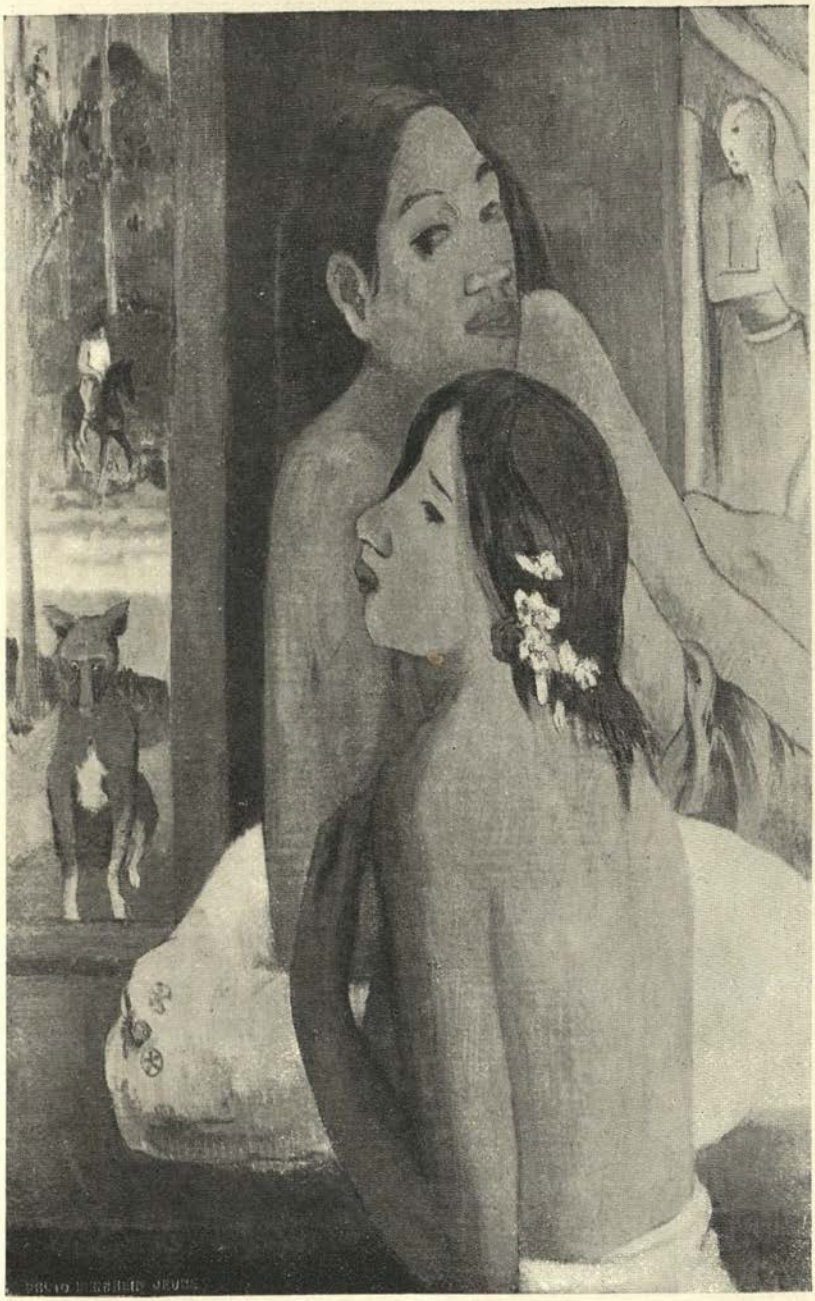
PAUL CÉZANNE was born in 1839 at Aix in Provence, where his father was a wealthy banker. He was a schoolfellow of Zola, who introduced him to Courbet and Manet, and thus turned his thoughts in the direction of painting. But Cézanne was never a professional painter in the sense of trying to make money by his work. Until the death of his father in 1886 he lived on an allowance of about £12 a month, and devoted himself to painting, caring little what became of his pictures when they were done. It is said that his wife, whom he married in 1867, used to follow in his tracks and collect the paintings that he had left lying about. To Cézanne more than anybody is due the arrest of painting from its pursuit of the visual impression in favour of constructive designing in paint. He did not consciously aim at the effects of what is now known as "Cubism," but he prepared the way for it by insisting upon the essential form or volume of objects in disregard of minor inflections of contour. He brought back into painting the conditions of depth, weight and solidity which the aims of Impressionism had comparatively ignored. Cézanne died in 1906.

"Portrait de Choquel" is a characteristic example of his work in oils. There is no distortion of the features, but the whole head is built up in paint by attention to its constructive planes.

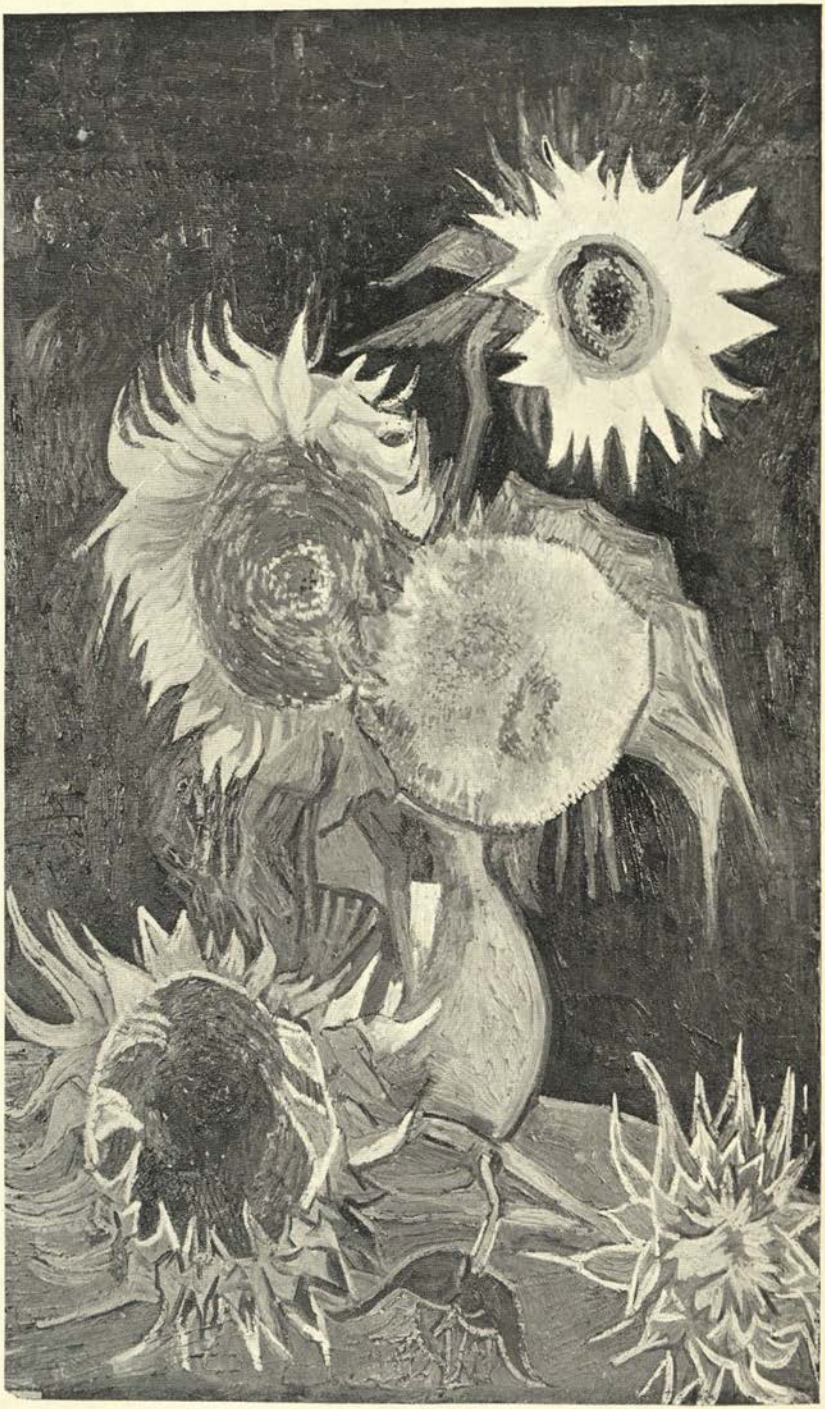
MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

PAUL GAUGUIN

PAUL GAUGUIN was born in Paris in 1851, being the son of a Breton father and a Peruvian creole mother. At the age of fourteen he ran away to sea, and sailed round the world more than once during his boyhood. Returning to Paris, he entered a bank, married, had children and settled down to a bourgeois life. Some paintings by Camille Pissarro awakened his artistic ambitions, and in 1880 he exhibited two landscapes in the manner of that artist in the Salon des Indépendants. For a time Gauguin worked in Brittany, where, with some followers, he founded the "school of Pont-Aven"—distinguished by the general aims of Neo-Impressionism combined with a simplified style of drawing. In 1887 he went to Martinique, and returned to Paris with a revived enthusiasm for the tropics. About this time he met Vincent Van Gogh, who persuaded Gauguin to join him in Provence. In 1891 Gauguin went to Tahiti, and henceforward was only an occasional visitor to France. The works that he brought home were thus described by M. Camille Mauclair: "The figures are outlined in firm strokes and painted in broad, flat tints on canvas which has the texture almost of tapestry. Many of these works are made repulsive by their aspect of multicoloured, crude and barbarous imagery. Yet one cannot but acknowledge the fundamental qualities, the beautiful values, the ornamental taste, and the impression of primitive animalism." Gauguin died in 1903.



DEUX TAÏTIENNES PAUL GAUGUIN



LES SOLEILS VINCENT VAN GOGH

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

VINCENT VAN GOGH

VINCENT VAN GOGH was born at Groot Zundert, in Dutch Brabant, where his father was a Lutheran pastor, in 1853. Being destined for commerce, he entered the office of his uncle, an art dealer, connected with the Paris house of Goupil. A born evangelist, in 1876 Van Gogh went to London, where he taught the poor and preached in the streets. In 1877 he returned to Amsterdam to train for the ministry, intending to do missionary work among the Belgian miners ; but he soon found that his true means of expression was in drawing. His sister had married Anton Mauve ; and for a time Van Gogh studied with him, and then went to Antwerp and finally to Paris, where he came into contact with Gauguin, Seurat and Pissarro. His object in asking Gauguin to go to Provence with him in 1887 was that, having different gifts, they might collaborate in the service of humanity. Disagreements between the two artists worked upon Van Gogh's highly-strung nature, and, after a violent attack upon Gauguin, he lost his reason, and with his own consent entered the lunatic asylum at Arles. Partially recovered, he lived for a time with Dr. Gachet, himself a painter, at Auvers-sur-Oise, but his health broke down again, and on July 28th, 1890, he shot himself.

" Les Soleils " is a striking example of the work of Van Gogh. It shows, above all, his passion for paint. In his hands the methods of the Impressionists and Neo-Impressionists were simplified and intensified, always in response to the call of the medium itself.

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

HENRI MATISSE

HENRI MATISSE was born in 1862. His early works seem to show that he started with the general aims of Impressionism and then, inspired, apparently, by Gauguin rather than Cézanne, reacted in the direction of a decorative simplicity. But the monumental character of Gauguin is entirely absent from the work of Matisse. His decorative aim seems to be the light arabesque in a sort of calligraphic shorthand, combined with flat patches of colour. In this manner he has produced large decorations of dancing figures, one of which was included in the second Post-Impressionist exhibition at the Grafton Galleries. At the end of 1919 a considerable number of works by Matisse were exhibited at the Leicester Galleries. They included some charming landscapes, in which the main character of the scene was expressed with remarkable directness and simplicity. Having regard to the markedly rhythmical nature of his drawing and design, it would be not inapt to describe Matisse as a Post-Impressionist Whistler.

"Portrait" gives a good general idea of his characteristic style. The drawing recalls that of the East in its calligraphic character, but the painting, though light and sketchy, is true in values, and the patches of tone are well considered from a decorative point of view.

PORTRAIT HENRI MATISSE

LA RUE LEPIC

PABLO PICASSO

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

PABLO PICASSO

PICASSO is the most versatile and perplexing of all the Post-Impressionists. He has passed through a great many phases, and some of them appear to be contradictory. He continues both the solidity of Cézanne and the simplification of Gauguin, but by temperament he would seem to be more in sympathy with the former than the latter. His general progress, at any rate, has been from a " monumental " style of painting, akin to the work of Daumier, in two dimensions, to a geometrical style in three—with hints of a fourth. In every aspect of his art he shows himself an accomplished craftsman ; his drawings, in particular, being full of expression. " La Rue Lepic " is interesting as showing Picasso in the Daumier stage of his development.

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

JEAN MARCHAND

JEAN MARCHAND was born in Paris in 1882. He studied under Bonnat and Luc-Olivier-Merson, and has exhibited at the Salon des Indépendants and the Salon d'Automne ; being Sociétaire of the latter. The influence of Cézanne is evident in his work. He might almost be described as a neater Cézanne.

LA GOUTTIÈRE

JEAN MARCHAND

PAYSAGE — ANDRÉ DÉRAIN

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

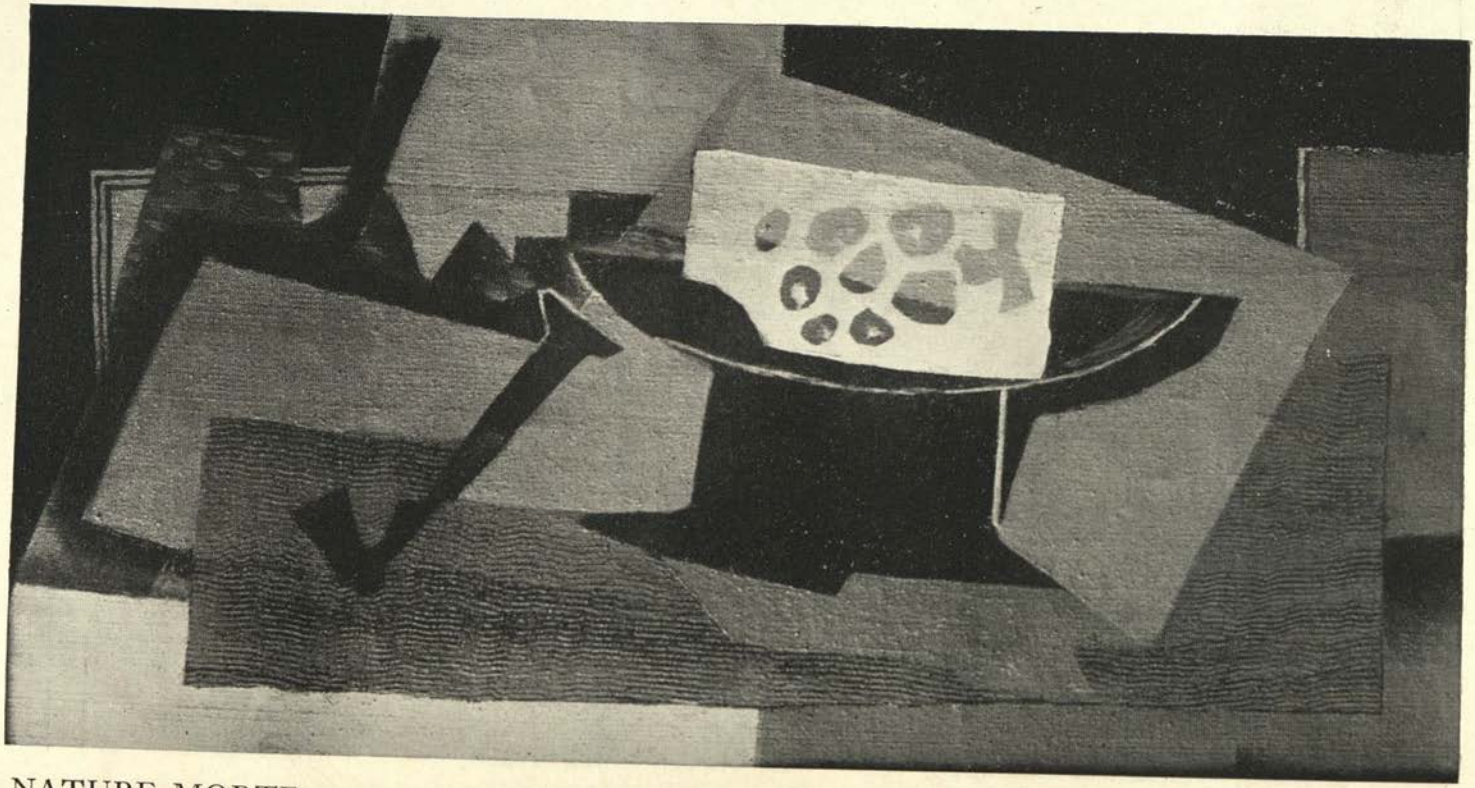
ANDRE DERAIN

THIS landscape by ANDRE DERAIN is typical of the more practicable general aims of Post-Impressionism. They might be defined as extreme simplification in drawing; rhythmical and emphatic design; disregard of light and shade for the purpose of realistic modelling; insistence on the third dimension of space as a factor in design; frank exposure of the substance of paint. With these aims are combined the æsthetic harvest of Impressionism represented by "the greatest possible vibrancy and luminosity in colour, obtained by the juxtaposition of pure bright pigment in small separate touches"—to quote from the summary of Mr. C. J. Holmes, in his "Notes on the Post-Impressionist Painters, Grafton Galleries, 1910-11."

AUGUSTE HERBIN

AUGUSTE HERBIN was born at Quievry, Department du Nord, in 1882. He describes himself as a pupil of nobody. Like all the rest of the world, he has visited the museums of Paris—" but not too often." Between 1908 and 1910 he exhibited at the Salon des Indépendants, and once at the Salon d'Automne. In 1918 there was a special exhibition of his work at " L'Effort Moderne " gallery of Léonce Rosenberg, Paris ; and there were examples of his work in a general exhibition of water-colours and drawings, 1919, and an exhibition of " The Masters of Cubism," 1920, at the same gallery. This illustration shows a disposition to relieve the extreme formality of Cubism with decorative patterns ; a tendency which may also be observed in the work of Survage.

NATURE MORTE AUGUSTE HERBIN



NATURE MORTE

G. BRAQUE

GEORGES BRAQUE

GEORGES BRAQUE was born at Argenteuil, Seine et Oise, in 1882. He describes himself as a pupil of the French School. He exhibited at the Salon des Indépendants between 1905 and 1909, and again in 1919. In the same year there was a special exhibition of his work at " L'Effort Moderne " gallery of Léonce Rosenberg, in Paris ; and examples of his work were included in a general exhibition of water-colours and drawings, 1919, and an exhibition of " The Masters of Cubism," 1920, at the same gallery. As this illustration shows, Braque is one of the most severe of the Cubists, basing his designs mainly upon rectangular forms.

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

JULES FLANDRIN

THE author was unable to obtain any biographical details relating to Jules Flandrin. " Fontenay-aux-Roses " seems to indicate a transition stage between Impressionism and Post-Impressionism ; and the general influence suggested is that of Cézanne.

FONTENAY-AUX-ROSES

JULES FLANDRIN

FLEURS ET FRUITS

VLAMINCK

MAURICE DE VLAMINCK

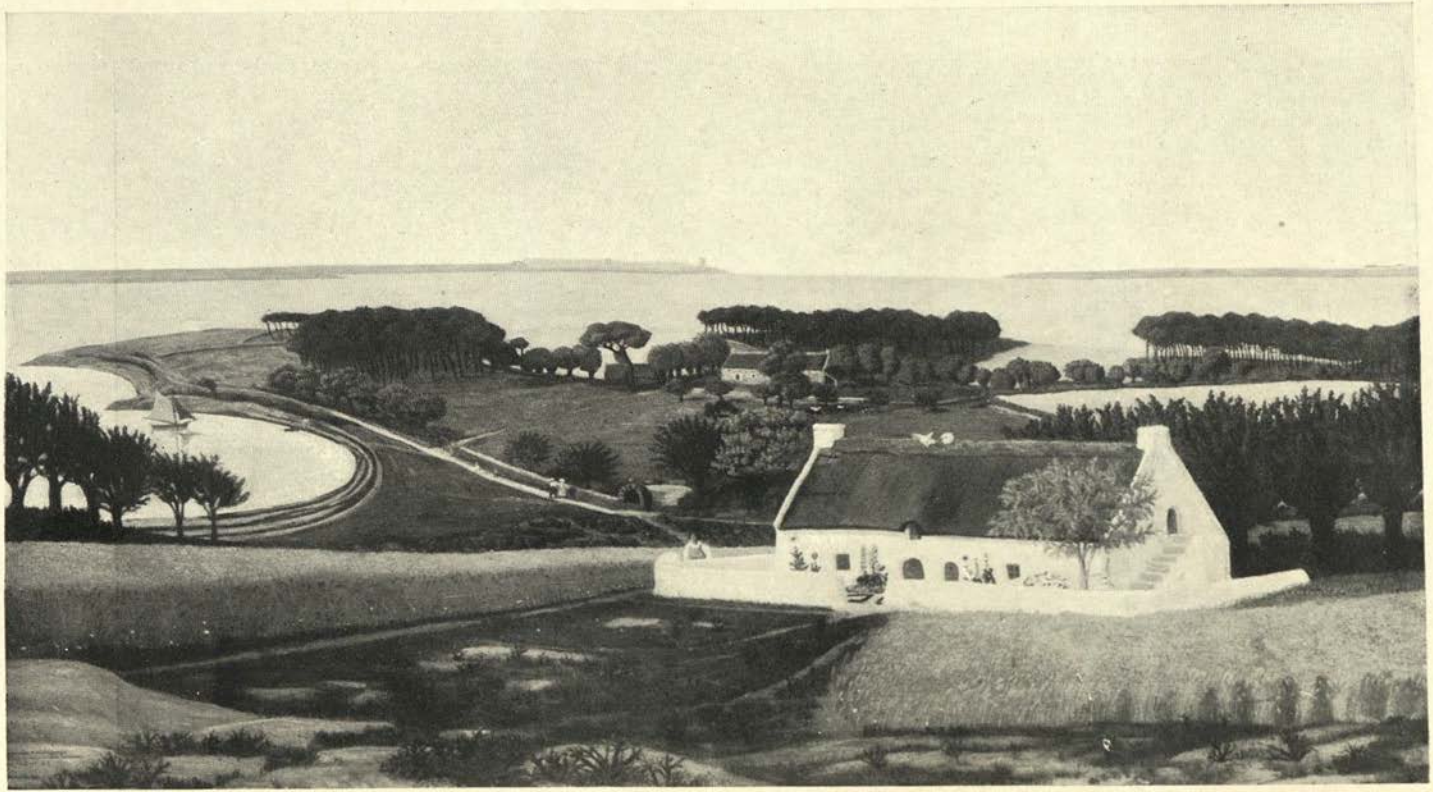
THE direct action of pigment, which was the passionate preoccupation of Vincent Van Gogh, is more noticeable in the work of MAURICE DE VLAMINCK, the Belgian painter, than in that of any of the later Post-Impressionists. His drawing is simplified, and his design is emphatic; but these characters seem to be not so much determined beforehand as to result spontaneously from the free and impulsive handling of the medium.

ANDRE DUNOYER DE SEGONZAC

ANDRE DUNOYER DE SEGONZAC was born at Boussy-St. Antoine in 1884. He was a pupil of L. O. Merson and J. P. Laurens, and has exhibited at the Salon d'Automne and Salon des Indépendants since 1909.

COMPOSITION

SEGONZAC



LANDSCAPE IN MORBILION

JEAN FRELANT

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

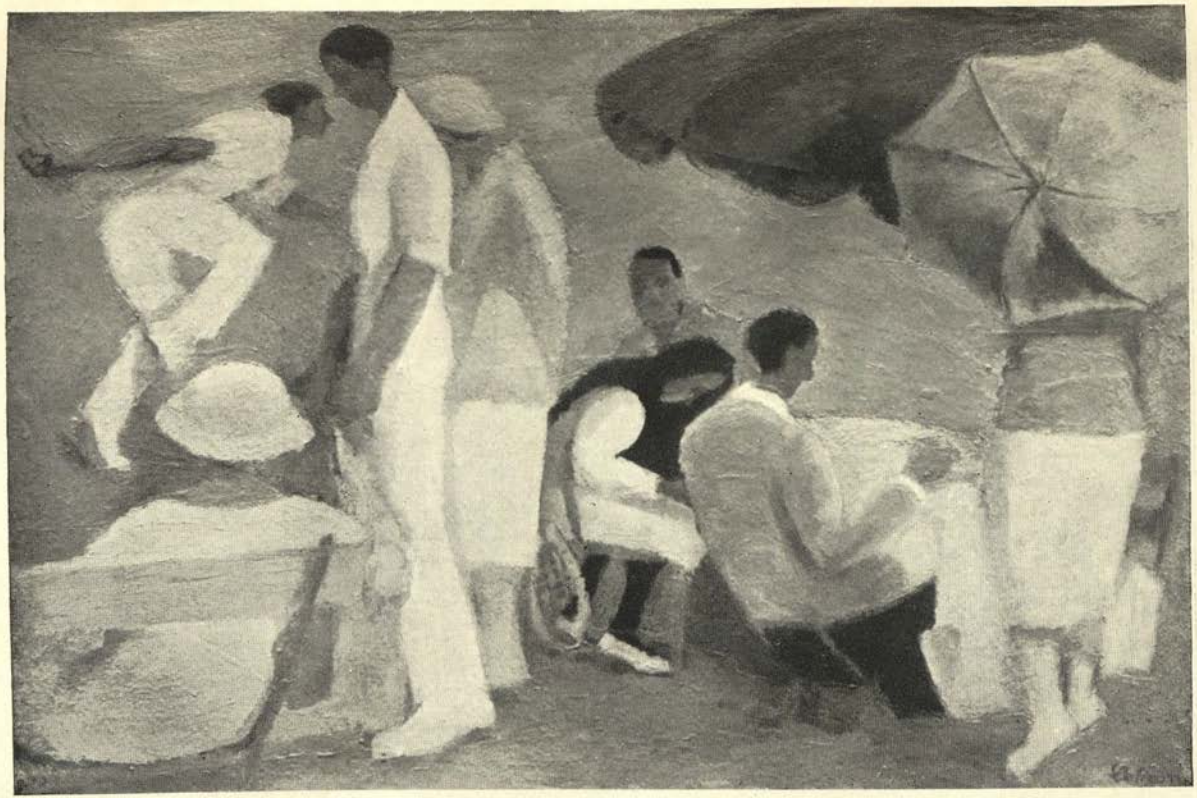
JEAN FRELAUT

JEAN FRELAUT was born at Grenoble in 1879. He studied at the Ecole des Beaux Arts, Paris, from 1900 to 1904, but had no other Academic training, though he pursued his art education in the Louvre, in Holland, and at Florence. He exhibited at the Salon and the Salon des Indépendants in 1906 and 1908. Since then his work has always been refused at the Salon, though he has been Engraver Associate since 1906. " Landscape in Morbilion " is particularly interesting, because it suggests the existence in France of a tendency which has lately become prominent in England : to combine the Pre-Raphaelite spirit with the methods of Post-Impressionism. It recalls a type of landscape now seen frequently in the exhibition of the New English Art Club and the London Group.

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

ROBERT LOTIRON

ROBERT LOTIRON was born in Paris in 1886. He attended the Ecole Libre de Peinture and several other academies, and has exhibited at the Salon des Indépendants and the Salon d'Automne ; being Sociétaire of the latter.



TENNIS ROBERT LOTIRON

LA LECTURE GINO SEVERINI

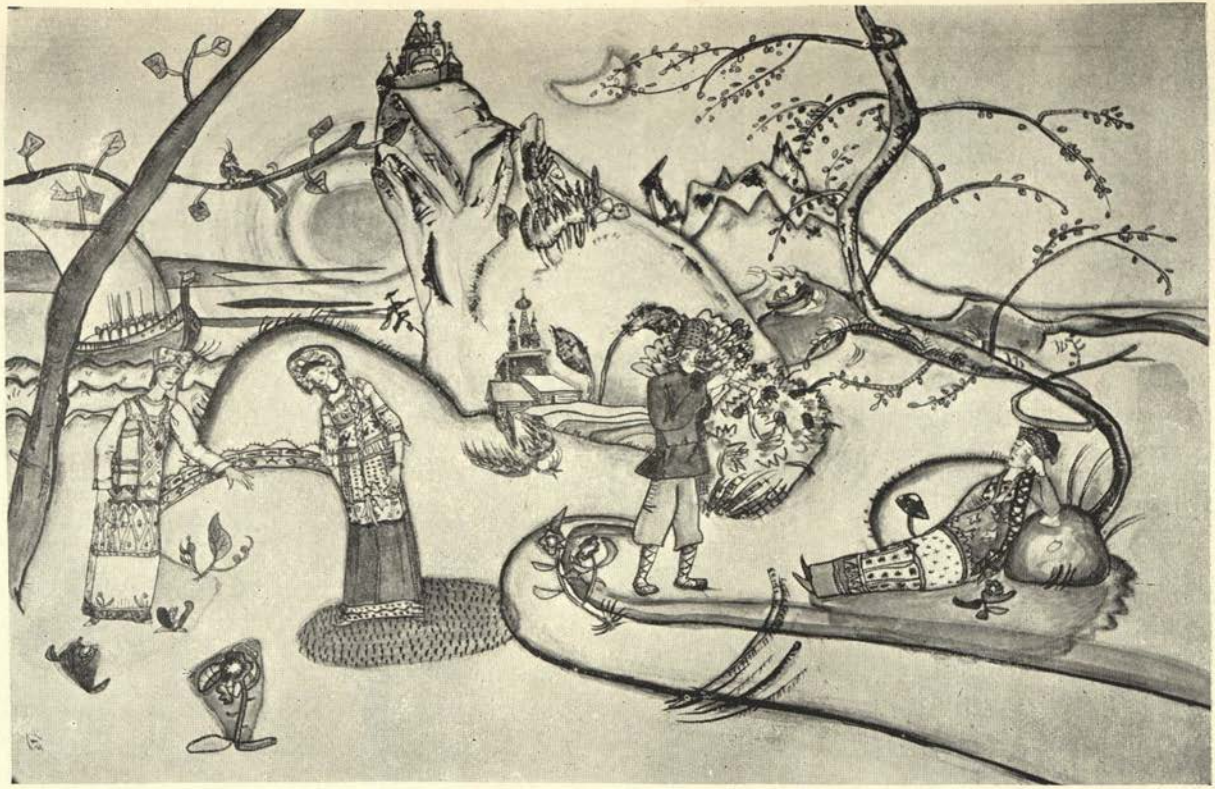
MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

GINO SEVERINI

GINO SEVERINI, the best-known painter among the Italian Futurists, was born at Cortona, near Arezzo, in Tuscany in 1883. He had no master in the strict sense of the word, but attributes the development of his æsthetic ideas and expedients to Vitruvius, Jacopo di Barbari and Fra Luca Pacioli. From Vitruvius, in particular, he claims to have learnt the basis of architecture. Since 1903, when he was represented at the National Society of Rome, Severini has exhibited in most of the larger towns of Europe. He has had " one-man shows " in Paris, 1912; London, 1912; Berlin, 1913; New York, 1916; and again in Paris at " L'Effort Moderne " gallery of Léonce Rosenberg in 1919. Works of his were included in the general exhibition of water-colours and drawings, 1919, and the exhibition of " Masters of Cubism," 1920, at the same gallery. " La Lecture," painted in 1917, seems to deal chiefly with the interpenetration of forms. The result is a curious resemblance of an X-ray photograph.

KANDINSKY

KANDINSKY, who is a Russian about fifty years of age, is the apostle of Expressionism. Intensely interested in the philosophical aspect of art, he has carried painting further in the direction of music than any of his contemporaries. Apparently he has no theoretical principles of design, but allows his rhythms and patterns to be determined by sub-conscious impulse. He has developed his own views of art in a book called *Spiritual Harmony*. Kandinsky has passed through several phases, but in all of them colour is the first consideration. He is generally associated with " non-representational " compositions, that is to say, with designs in which the forms of nature are ignored ; but in this drawing, made in Moscow in the first year of the war, he has introduced figures, trees and architecture in which the influence of primitive Russian art is evident. Colour is used sparingly but intensely, the general effect of the drawing being prismatic. The background is washed with faint blues, yellows and greens. The red in the skirt of the woman who bends to her right, and in the coat of the man, is repeated in the outline of the hill behind the woman's head and in the distant buildings ; and the blue in the man's trousers, and the deep blue of the circle of shadow in which the woman stands, are repeated in the triangular shadow in the foreground and in one of the lines across the distant sea. A belt of greenish light surrounds the sun and is repeated, more faintly, in the mountains on the right of the drawing.



MOSCOW KANDINSKY

LORD RIBBLESDALE JOHN SARGENT

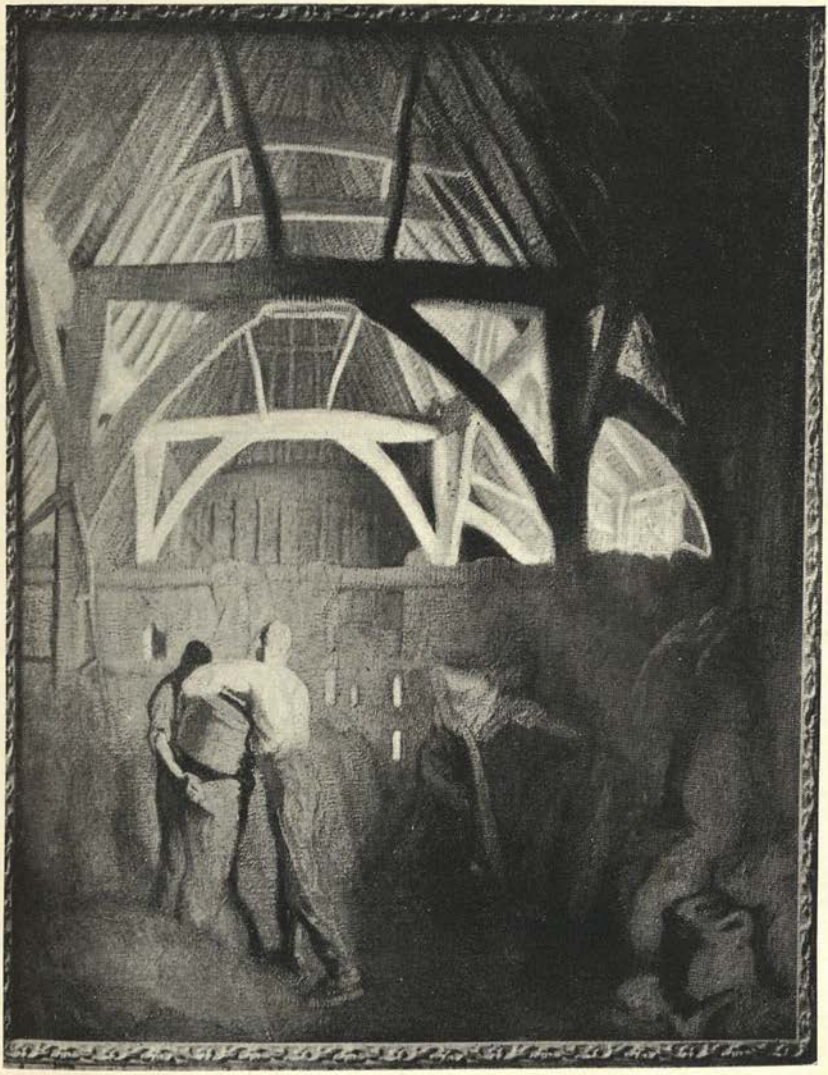
MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

JOHN SINGER SARGENT, R.A.

JOHN SINGER SARGENT, R.A., was born in Florence in 1856, his father being a Boston physician. His artistic genius was evident at an early age, and after his general education in Italy and Germany he entered the studio of Carolus Duran; his first picture being exhibited in the Salon in 1877. A visit to Spain brought him into contact with the works of Velazquez, who has remained the predominating influence on his work in portraiture. Besides portraits and landscapes, Sargent has painted some important decorations, notably for the Boston Public Library. He was made A.R.A. in 1894, and R.A. in 1897; and is a member of the chief artistic societies of Europe and America. He is represented in the National Gallery by "Lord Ribblesdale"; in the Tate Gallery by "Carnation, Lily, Lily, Rose" and "Miss Ellen Terry as Lady Macbeth"; in the National Portrait Gallery by "Coventry Patmore" and "Henry James"; and in the Luxembourg by "La Carmencita."

GEORGE CLAUSEN, R.A.

GEORGE CLAUSEN, R.A., who is of Danish extraction, was born in London in 1852, his father being a decorative artist. Trained in South Kensington, Clausen himself started with the idea of becoming a designer ; but, under the advice of Edwin Long, R.A., he became a painter ; studying in Paris under Bouguereau and Robert Fleury, and for a time in Antwerp. His first picture at the Academy was " High Mass at Volendam," exhibited in 1876. Clausen paints both the figure and landscape, a modified Impressionism being evident in his work. He has also shown the advantage of his early training in some mural decorations. He was made A.R.A. in 1895, and R.A. in 1908. As Professor of Painting at the Royal Academy, he delivered a memorable series of lectures. These were published as " Six Lectures on Painting " (1904), and " Aims and Ideals in Art " (1906). Clausen is represented in the Tate Gallery by " The Girl at the Gate " and " The Gleaners Returning."



THE BARN GEORGE CLAUSEN

THE LINE OF THE PLOUGH — ARNESBY BROWN

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

JOHN ALFRED ARNESBY BROWN, R.A.

JOHN ALFRED ARNESBY BROWN, R.A., was born at Nottingham in 1866. He is a nephew of Philip James Bailey, the author of " Festus." After leaving the Nottingham School of Art, Brown was for a time a pupil of Andrew MacCallum, and later went to the Herkomer School at Bushey for about three years. His first picture in the Royal Academy was " A Cornish Pasture," exhibited in 1890. Of all modern British painters, Brown seems to be in the most direct descent from Constable, though he has embodied in his work certain characteristics of French Impressionism. Practically all his pictures, generally of landscape with cattle, have been painted in East Anglia and Cornwall. He was made A.R.A. in 1903, and R.A. in 1915. He is represented in the Tate Gallery by " Morning," " Silver Morning," and " The Line of the Plough " ; and in the Guildhall Art Gallery by " The River Bank " ; and his works are to be found in most of the public galleries in this country and the Dominions.

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

SIR JOHN LAVERY, A.R.A.

Sir John Lavery, A.R.A., was born at Belfast in 1856. At an early age he went to Glasgow, where, after some difficulties, he devoted himself to painting. Later he studied in Paris under Bouguereau, Robert Fleury and Meissonier. Lavery was one of the founders of what is known as " the Glasgow School " ; a group of painters inspired more or less by the ideals of Whistler, but with a stronger taste in colour. In 1881 he exhibited " The Courtship of Julian Peveril " in the Royal Scottish Academy, and since then he has produced a very large number of portraits, including a portrait group of the Royal Family for the National Portrait Gallery, and many landscapes and seascapes, generally of the coast of Morocco. Lavery was made an A.R.A. in 1911, and knighted in 1918. He is a member of the Royal Scottish and Royal Hibernian Academies, and of a great many foreign societies. His works are to be found in the Luxembourg and in the Municipal Galleries of Rome, Venice, Berlin, Brussels, Munich, Vienna and Madrid.

THE CONVALESCENT — SIR JOHN LAVERY

RANNOCH

D. Y. CAMERON

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

DAVID YOUNG CAMERON, R.A.

DAVID YOUNG CAMERON, R.A., best known as an etcher, was born in Glasgow in 1865, being a son of the manse. He first attracted attention with his etchings of the Clyde, which were followed by similar works done in Holland, Italy, London and Belgium. Later he developed as a painter in oil and water-colours; his work being remarkable for its gravity and simplicity, obtained rather by feeling for the structure of landscape than by obviously decorative intention. He was made A.R.A. in 1911, and R.A. in 1920; and he is a member of the Royal Scottish Academy, the Royal Society of Painters in Water Colours, and the International Society. His works are to be found in the Tate Gallery, the British Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum, and in many public galleries on the Continent of Europe and in the Dominions.

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

SIR WILLIAM ORPEN, R.A.

SIR WILLIAM ORPEN was born in 1878. He was educated at the Dublin Metropolitan School of Art, and at the Slade School. A gifted draughtsman, he is equally famous as a portrait and subject painter. A member of the New English Art Club and the International Society, he was made A.R.A. in 1910, and R.A. in 1919. During the previous year he held an important exhibition of his war pictures, many of which he has presented to the nation. His pictures of the Peace Conference, including this one of the actual signing of Peace, were a feature of the Academy exhibition of 1920. Orpen, who is a member of the Royal Hibernian Academy, was knighted in 1918.

THE SIGNING OF PEACE SIR WILLIAM ORPEN

THE BLACK VASE — WILLIAM NICHOLSON

WILLIAM NICHOLSON

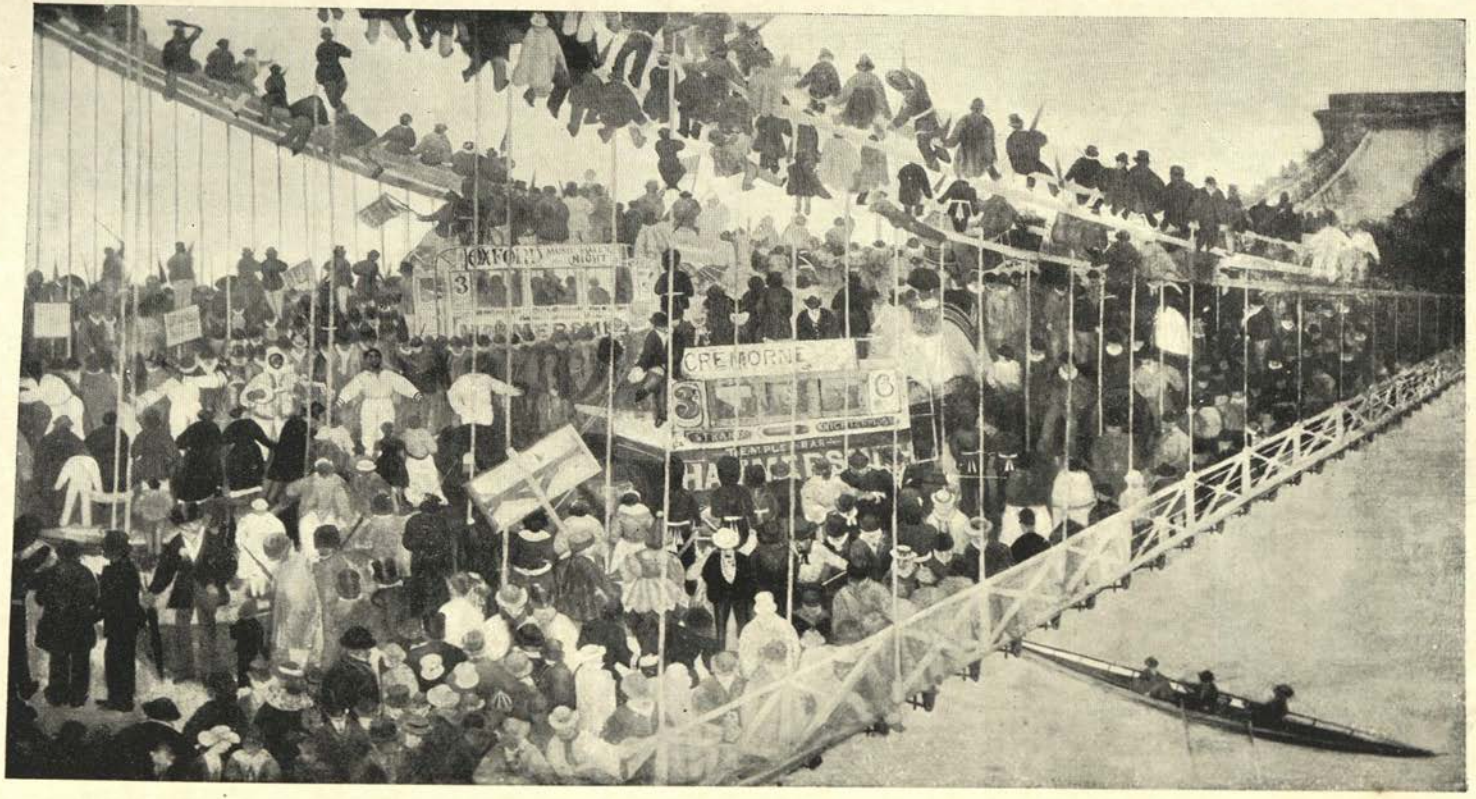
WILLIAM NICHOLSON was born at Newark-on-Trent in 1872. He is brother-in-law to James Pryde, with whom, as "the Beggarstaffe Brothers," he may be said to have created poster designing in this country. Besides painting, Nicholson has done a great deal of decorative book illustration. "An Alphabet," "An Almanac of Twelve Sports," "London Types" (all in 1898), and "Characters of Romance" (1900), are among his publications. His paintings include portraits of "The Painter's Mother," "W. E. Henley," and "La Belle Chauffeuse"; and among his engravings are portraits of "Queen Victoria" and "General Smuts."

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

JAMES PRYDE

JAMES PRYDE was born in 1869. He was trained in Paris, at the Atelier Julian, under Bouguereau. Pryde is a member of the International Society, where he has exhibited regularly, as also at the Grafton Galleries, the Munich Secessionist Exposition, and at Berlin, Dresden, St. Louis, and Pittsburg. He is represented in the Corporation Galleries, Glasgow, and in the Johannesburg collection. He is brother-in-law to William Nicholson, with whom he collaborated in poster designing as " the Beggarstaffe Brothers."

THE SLUM JAMES PRYDE



HAMMERSMITH BRIDGE

WALTER GREAVES

WALTER GREAVES

WALTER GREAVES was born about 1840, being the son of a Chelsea boat-builder who used to row Turner about the river. Some time in the late 'fifties Greaves and his brother, Henry, met Whistler, for whom they performed similar services; but eventually they entered his studio, acting as his assistants and learning all his methods. "Hammersmith Bridge on Boat-race Day," however, was painted before Greaves met Whistler, when the artist was only sixteen. In some respects it is one of the most remarkable pictures ever painted. The direct expression in painting of a youth of talent, it anticipates a good many of the characteristics deliberately aimed at by the Post-Impressionists: the summary treatment of form, and emphatic design in bright colour.

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

ALFRED JAMES MUNNINGS, A.R.A.

ALFRED JAMES MUNNINGS, A.R.A., was born at Mendham in Suffolk. He studied at the Norwich School of Art for six years, from fourteen to twenty, but is essentially a direct student of nature. At the age of nineteen he exhibited at both the Royal Academy and the Royal Institute of Painters in Water Colours, and has exhibited regularly at the Royal Academy ever since. He was made A.R.A. in 1919. Munnings is represented in the Tate Gallery by "Epsom Downs; City and Suburban Day," purchased out of the Chantrey Bequest Fund in 1920; at Oldham by "The White Slave," a white horse leaving a fair; at Preston by "The Last of the Fair"; at Brighton by "The Shady Grove"; and in the National Gallery, Sydney, by "Sun and Shade" and "Washing a Horse." He contributed no fewer than forty-five pictures to the Canadian War Memorials, and one to the Imperial War Museum.

EPSOM DOWNS A. J. MUNNINGS

READING THE LAW WILLIAM ROTHENSTEIN

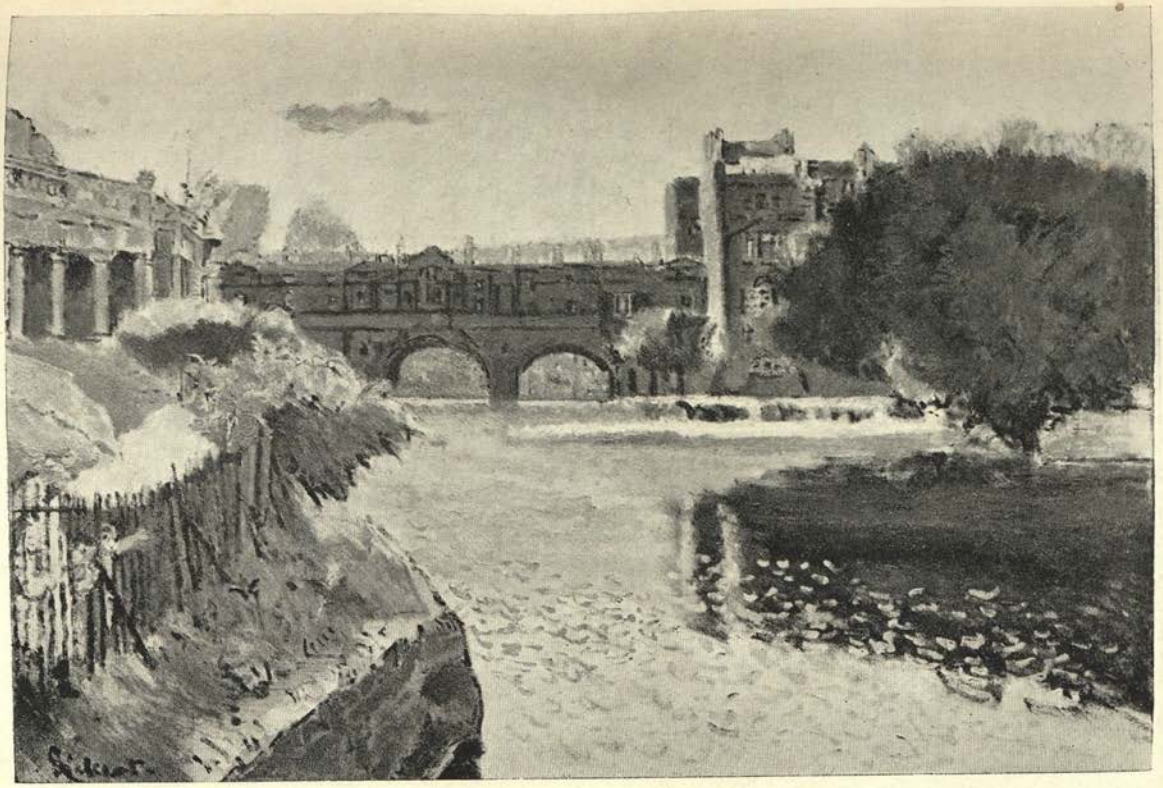
MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

WILLIAM ROTHENSTEIN

WILLIAM ROTHENSTEIN was born at Bradford in 1872. He came to London in 1888, and worked under Legros at the Slade School and afterwards in Paris, where he first exhibited. In 1893 he came to Oxford and drew a series of portraits, which, published as "Oxford Characters" in 1896, attracted great attention. Though he has painted many important pictures, it is perhaps as a portrait draughtsman that Rothenstein is best known, and he has published several series in this kind. Among his literary publications are a "Life of Goya" and "A Plea for a Wider Use of Artists and Craftsmen." In 1917 Rothenstein became Professor of Civic Art at Sheffield University; and in 1920 he was made Principal of the Royal College of Art, South Kensington. He is represented in the Tate Gallery by an oil painting, "Jews Mourning in a Synagogue" and a drawing of "Auguste Rodin"; and there are works of his in the British Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum, at Oxford and Cambridge, and in many of the public galleries of Europe.

WALTER SICKERT

WALTER RICHARD SICKERT was born in 1860, being the eldest son of Oswald Adelbert Sickert, a painter. He was educated at King's College School and Heatherley's School of Art, Newman Street. Sickert, who is both painter and etcher, is the living artist who combines most successfully the characteristic merits of the British and French schools ; and he is, incidentally, the most perceptive illustrator of the social comedy since Hogarth. He is a member of the New English Art Club and the International Society. As visiting Teacher of Drawing and Painting to the L.C.C. Technical Institute, Westminster, he has had a great influence upon our younger artists. He is represented in the Tate Gallery, the British Museum, the Luxembourg, and the Bibliothèque Nationale.



THE BRIDGE, BATH — WALTER SICKERT

THE BEAVER HAT — P. WILSON STEER

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

P. WILSON STEER

P. WILSON STEER was born at Birkenhead in 1860. He received his first artistic training at the Gloucester School of Art, and then proceeded to Paris, where he studied first at the Académie Julien and afterwards at the Ecole des Beaux Arts, under Cabanel. In 1885, before which time he had exhibited three pictures at the Royal Academy, Steer took a leading part in the formation of the New English Art Club " by artists who felt that their work was out of sympathy with the general quality of work at other exhibitions." Since 1886 practically all Steer's work has been shown at the New English Art Club. He is represented in the Uffizi Gallery, Florence, by a portrait of himself, and in the Tate Gallery by " Chepstow Castle " and " The Music Room " ; the last having been presented by the National Art Collections Fund in 1911.

The first thing that strikes you in looking at " The Beaver Hat " is the absence from it of any sign of a theoretical attitude on the part of the painter. The natural charm of the model is accepted whole-heartedly, and not less whole-heartedly translated into terms of the brush. As compared with eighteenth century portraits, it is much more direct in handling and informal in drawing and design ; more Naturalistic, in fact ; but at the same time the advantage of arrangement is fully perceived—though without the emphasis that would make it an " arrangement " in the Whistlerian sense.

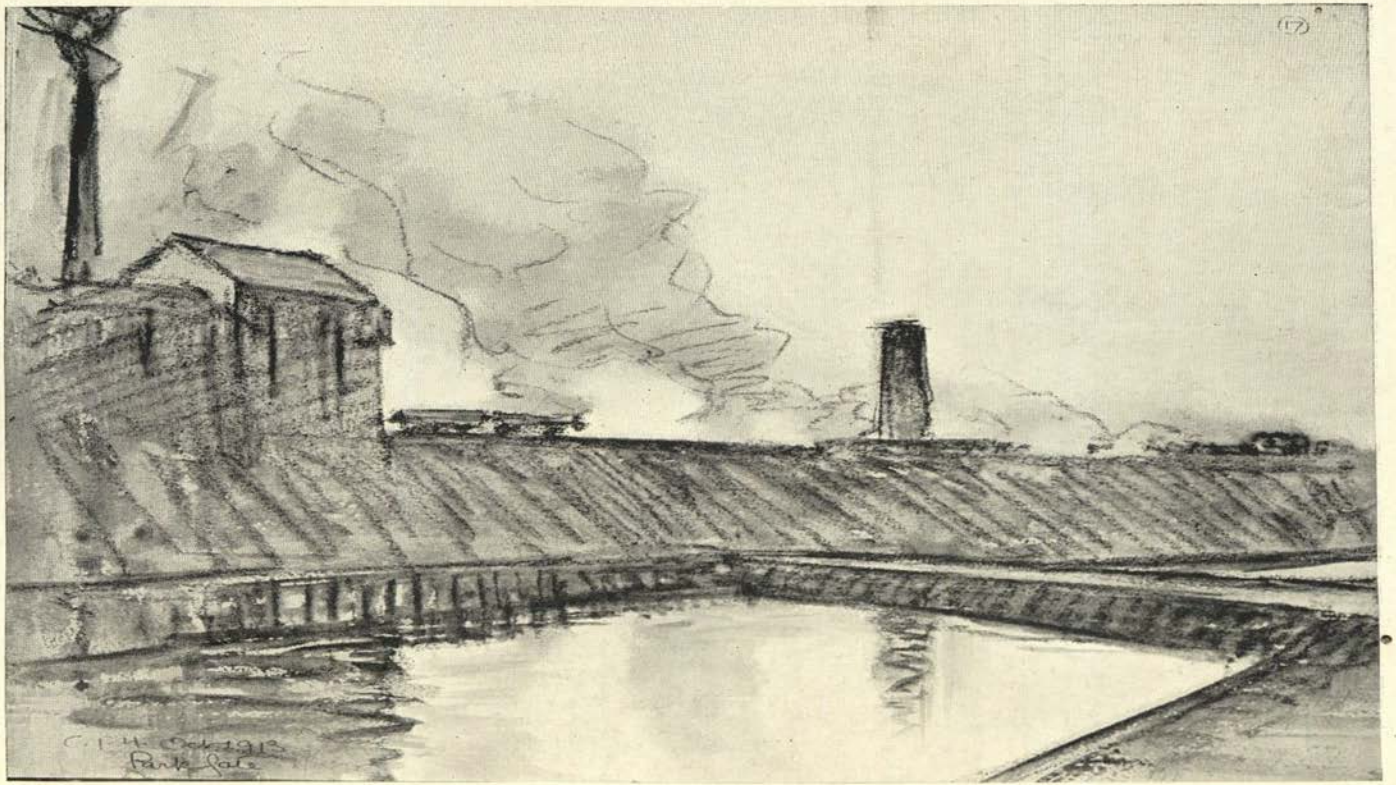
MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

WALTER WESTLEY RUSSELL, A.R.A.

WALTER WESTLEY RUSSELL, A.R.A., was born in 1867. He studied at the Westminster School of Art, under Professor Frederick Brown, and is now Teacher at the Slade School. Russell, who paints both landscape and the figure, is member of the New English Art Club, the International Society, the Royal Society of Portrait Painters, and the National Society of Portrait Painters. He was made A.R.A. in 1920.

BY THE SEA

WALTER RUSSELL



INDUSTRIAL LANDSCAPE C. J. HOLMES

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

CHARLES JOHN HOLMES

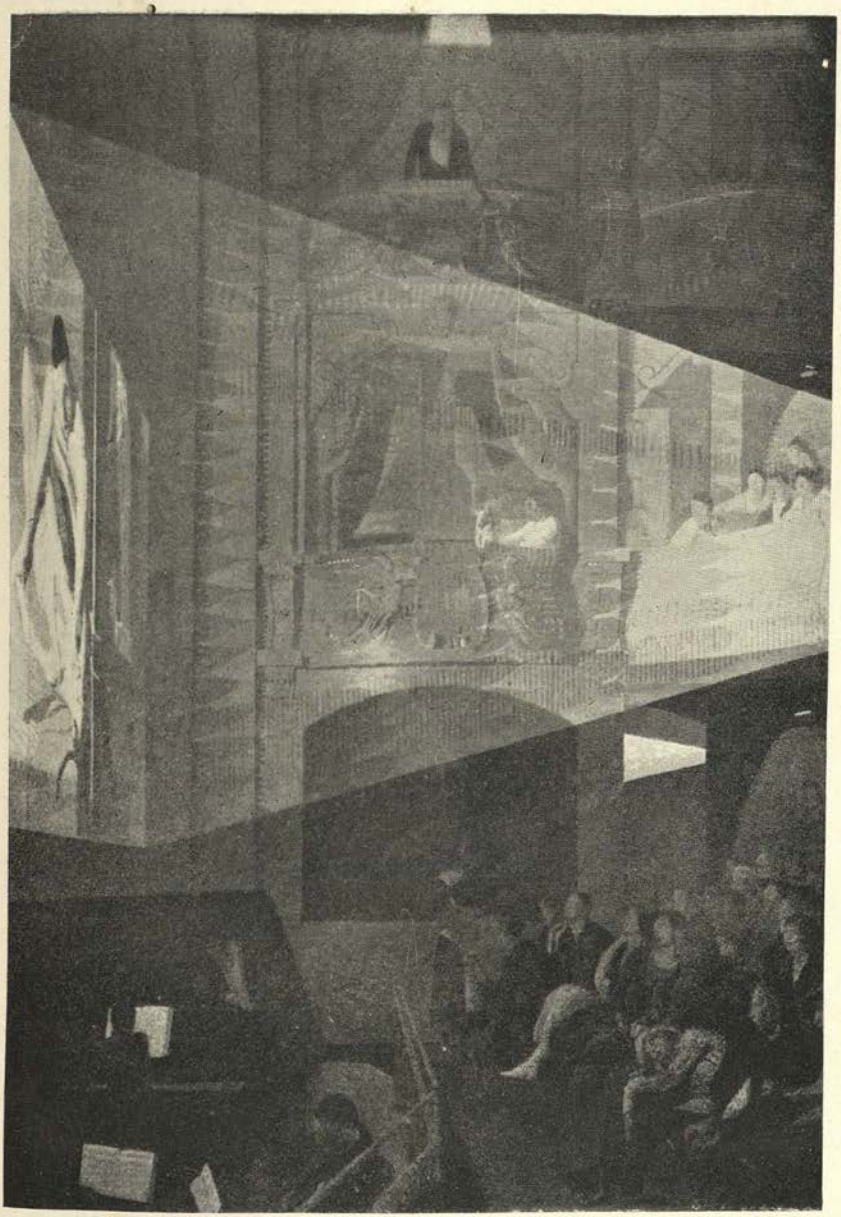
Charles John Holmes, Director of the National Gallery, was born at Stratton, Cornwall, in 1868, being son of the Rev. Charles Rivington Holmes. He was educated at St. Edmund's, Canterbury; Eton; and Oxford. A member of the New English Art Club, his landscapes in both oil and water-colour are remarkable for extreme simplification and structural design. He was Slade Professor of Fine Arts at Oxford from 1904 to 1910; Director, Keeper and Secretary of the National Portrait Gallery from 1909 to 1916, in which year he became Director of the National Gallery in succession to Sir Charles Holroyd. His contributions to literature are important. He was successively manager of the Vale Press, and Editor of *The Burlington Magazine*; and his publications include monographs on Constable and Rembrandt, and several essays in æsthetics. As artist he is represented in the Tate Gallery, the British Museum, the Ashmolean Museum, and in the Art Galleries of Manchester and Johannesburg.

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

WALTER BAYES

WALTER BAYES was born in 1869. A member of a distinguished family of artists, which includes Gilbert Bayes, the sculptor, and Jessie Bayes, the illuminator and decorative designer, he studied at evening classes only except for three months at the Westminster Art School, of which he has lately been promoted Head Master. He is represented in the Public Galleries of Liverpool, Dublin, Johannesburg, and Oldham, and in the Imperial War Museum. His work for Dublin was commissioned by the late Sir Hugh Lane. Besides painting and designing for tapestry and other forms of decoration, Bayes has turned his attention to stage scenery. He designed and executed scenes for Lord Dunsany's "Gods of the Mountain," produced at the Haymarket Theatre some years ago. Bayes is a Member of the Royal Society of Painters in Water Colours.

"Oratio Obliqua" is a good illustration of the combination of art and science which lends interest to the work of Bayes. The problem is one of perspective, but it is worked out in terms of decoration. One has only to compare it with similar subjects by Walter Sickert to see the difference in the mental attitude of the two painters. The facts of the scene are represented by both, and each responds to the human interest as indicated by type, attitude and facial expression; but in the work of Bayes much more reliance is placed upon the direct action of design; the effect on the mind of space, proportion, angular relation and pattern of tone.



ORATIO OBLIQUA — WALTER BAYES

A WINDY DAY ANNE ESTELLE RICE

ANNE ESTELLE RICE

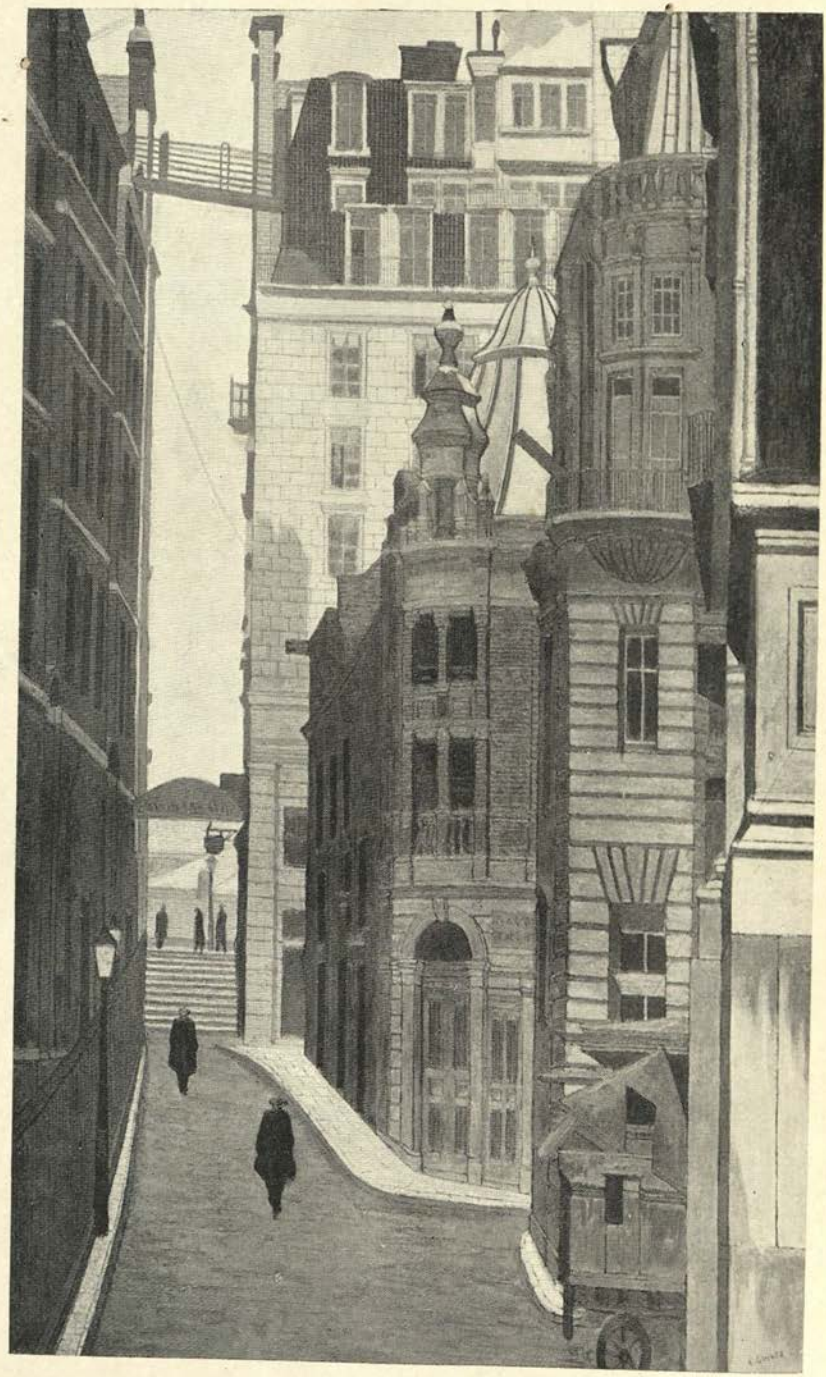
ANNE ESTELLE RICE was born in Pennsylvania. She studied at the Industrial Art School, Philadelphia, and worked for a number of years as an illustrator, contributing to *The Saturday Evening Post*, *Ladies' Home Journal*, *Collier's Weekly*, *Metropolitan Magazine*, and *Harper's Magazine*. Later, Estelle Rice studied painting in Paris under the influence of J. D. Fergusson and S. J. Peploe. She is an exhibitor at, and an Associate of, the Salon d'Automne, and an exhibitor at the Salon des Indépendants.

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

HAROLD GILMAN

HAROLD GILMAN was born at Road, Somerset, in 1876. He was educated at Abingdon, Rochester and Tonbridge schools, and in 1894 went to Oxford, but left on account of bad health, and the following year went to Odessa. In 1896 he started painting at the Hastings Art School, proceeding in 1897 to the Slade School, where he worked under Professor Brown, Henry Tonks, Wilson Steer and Walter Russell. In 1904 Gilman went to Spain, and the following year to America. On his return he settled in London, and was one of the early members of the group started by Walter Sickert at 19, Fitzroy Street, which afterwards developed into the Camden Town Group. As a rule Gilman went abroad in the summer, to Norway, Sweden or Dieppe. Gilman was first President of the London Group. He died in 1919.

WOODED LANDSCAPE HAROLD GILMAN



CARTING LANE CHARLES GINNER

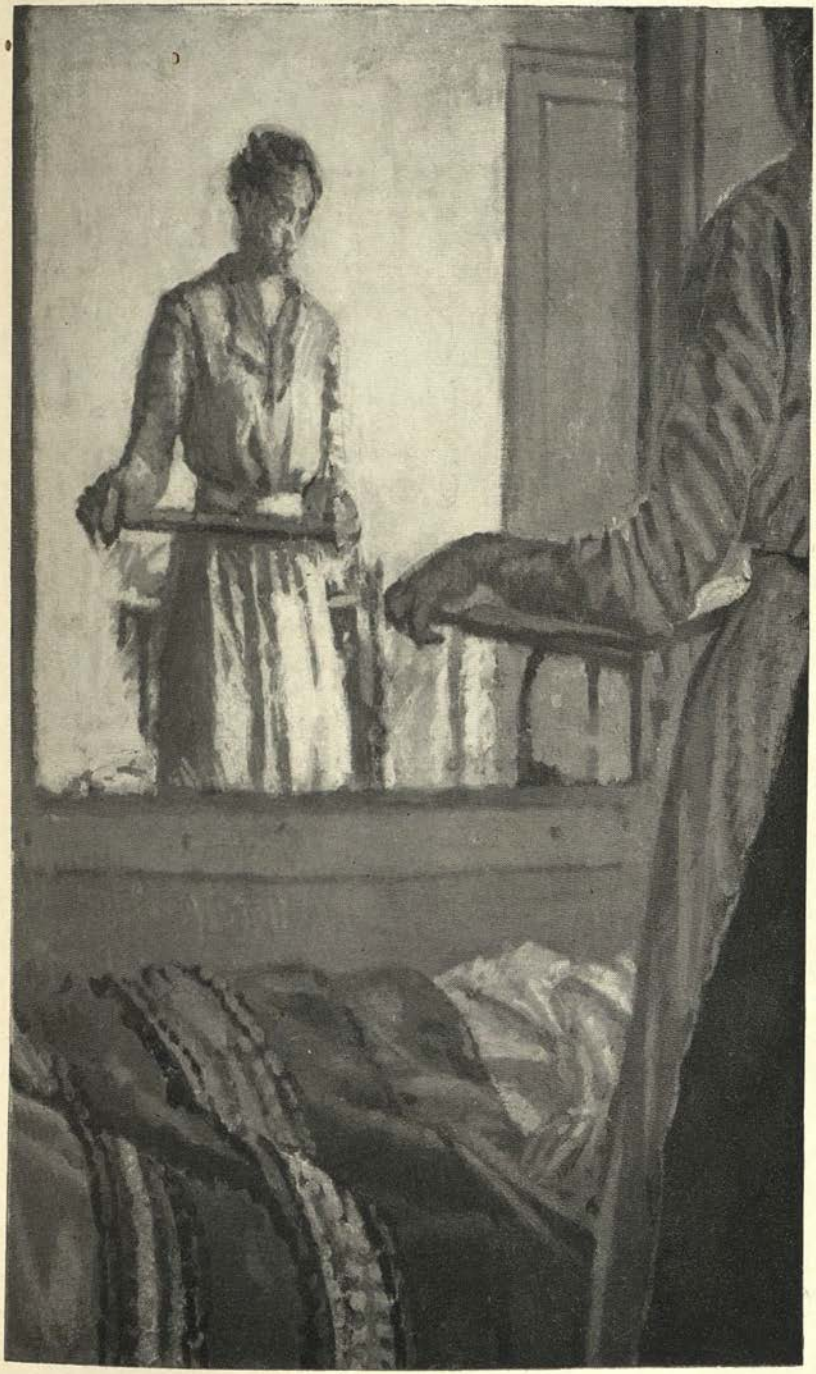
MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

CHARLES GINNER

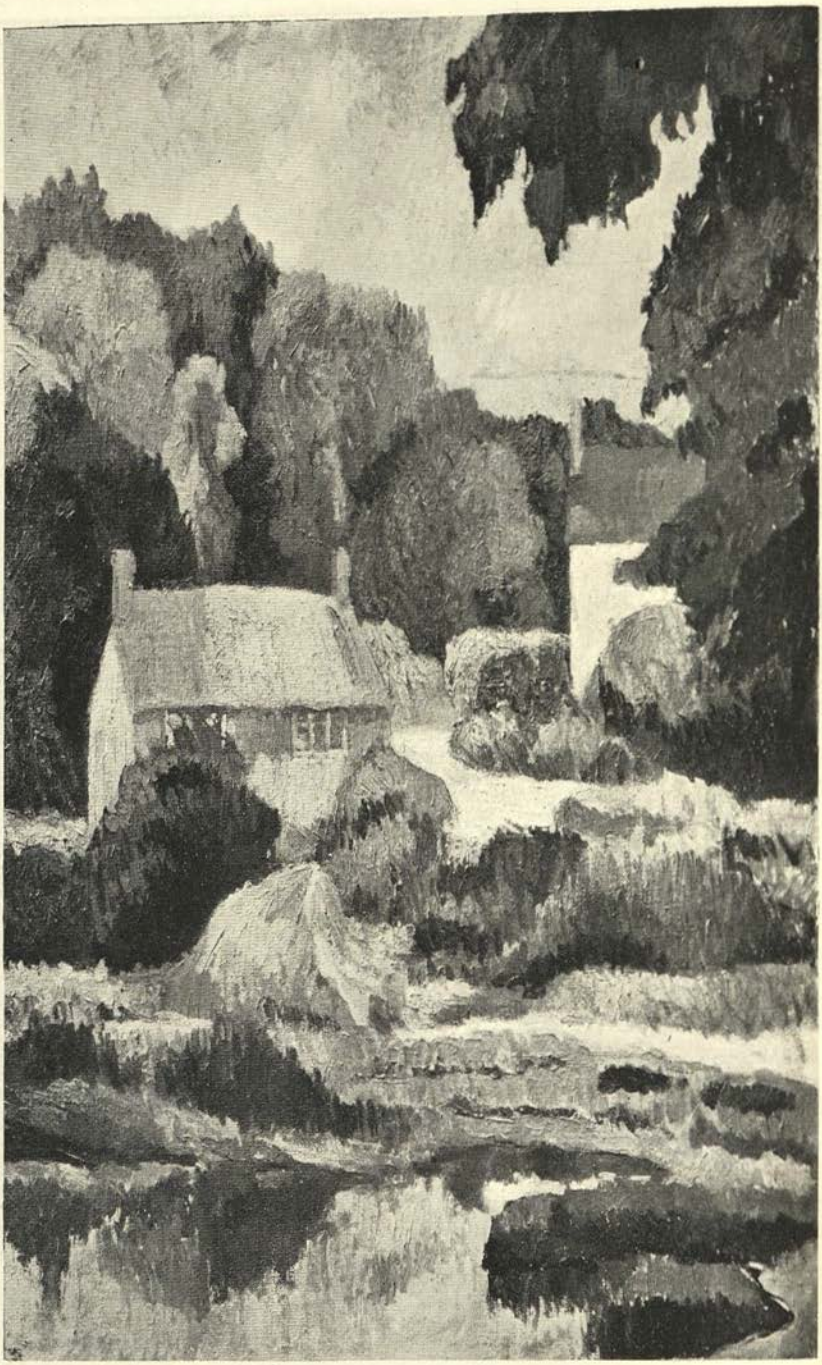
CHARLES GINNER was born at Cannes, Alpes Maritimes, France, of English parents, in 1879. Educated at the College Stanislas, Cannes, he went to Paris in 1899 to study architecture, working in an office. Deciding to become a painter, he entered the Académie Vitti, under the Spanish artist, Anglada y Camarasa, and also attended the Ecole des Beaux Arts for anatomy, etc. In 1909 he went to Buenos Aires, where he held his first exhibition. The following year he came to London, where he met the late Harold Gilman and Spencer F. Gore, and joined the group, afterwards the Camden Town Group, which then held its Saturday afternoon meetings in Fitzroy Street. Ginner is a member of the newly formed Group X.

SYLVIA GOSSE

SYLVIA GOSSE was born in London in 1881, being the daughter of Mr. Edmund Gosse, the distinguished writer. After passing through the Academy Schools, Miss Gosse became a pupil of Walter Sickert, who taught her drawing, painting and etching. Since 1911 she has been a regular exhibitor at the New English Art Club, the London Group—of which she is a member—the Allied Artists' Association, and other societies. She is an Associate of the Royal Society of Painter-Etchers. Miss Gosse is represented in the Print Room of the British Museum, the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, and the Johannesburg Art Gallery ; and her large landscape, " A Mountain Graveyard," and a water-colour, have been purchased by the Contemporary Art Society.



THE SICK CIVILIAN SYLVIA GOSSE



THE WAYSIDE POOL J. B. MANSON

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

J. B. MANSON

J. B. MANSON was born in 1879. He studied at the Lambeth School of Art, at Heatherley's, and at Julian's, in Paris, where he was a pupil of Jean Paul Laurens. By sympathy he is related to the French Impressionists, to Camille Pissarro in particular. He is more interested in light and colour than in anything else, and tries to express form by the juxtaposition of tones of colour rather than by any arbitrary use of line. Lately, however—as appears in "The Wayside Pool," painted in 1919—he has responded to the influence of Cézanne. Manson, who holds an official position at the National Gallery of British Art, was the first Secretary of the London Group, and is Hon. Secretary of the Camden Town Group and the Monarro Group. One of his water-colours has been bought by the Contemporary Art Society.

ROBERT BEVAN

ROBERT BEVAN was born at Hove, Sussex, and studied in Paris. He is a member of the London Group, and is represented in the Brighton Art Gallery.

THE STUDENT ROBERT BEVAN

MISS M. MUIRHEAD S. DE KARLOWSKA

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

S. DE KARLOWSKA

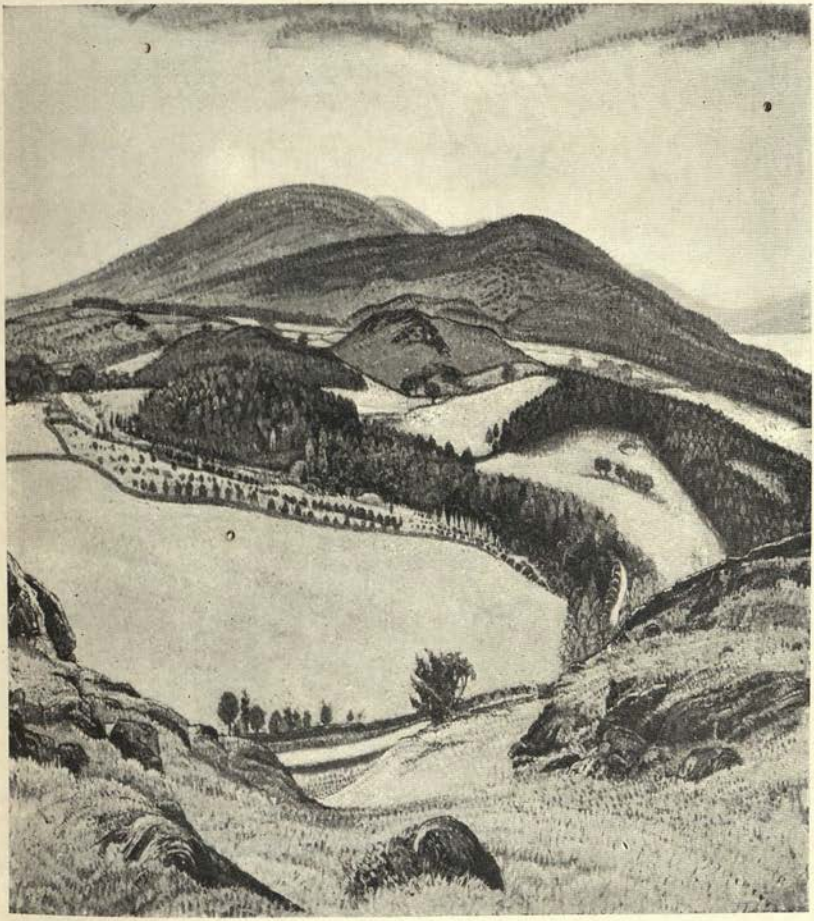
S. DE KARLOWSKA, who is Mrs. ROBERT BEVAN, was born at Szeliwy, in the Government of Warsaw, Poland. She studied in Warsaw, Cracow, and Paris, and is a member of the London Group and the Allied Artists' Association.

"Miss M. Muirhead" is an example of the modern tendency to simplification in painting. There is no evasion or distortion of the facts, but everything is considered beforehand with a view to simple and effective statement with the brush, in an organised design.

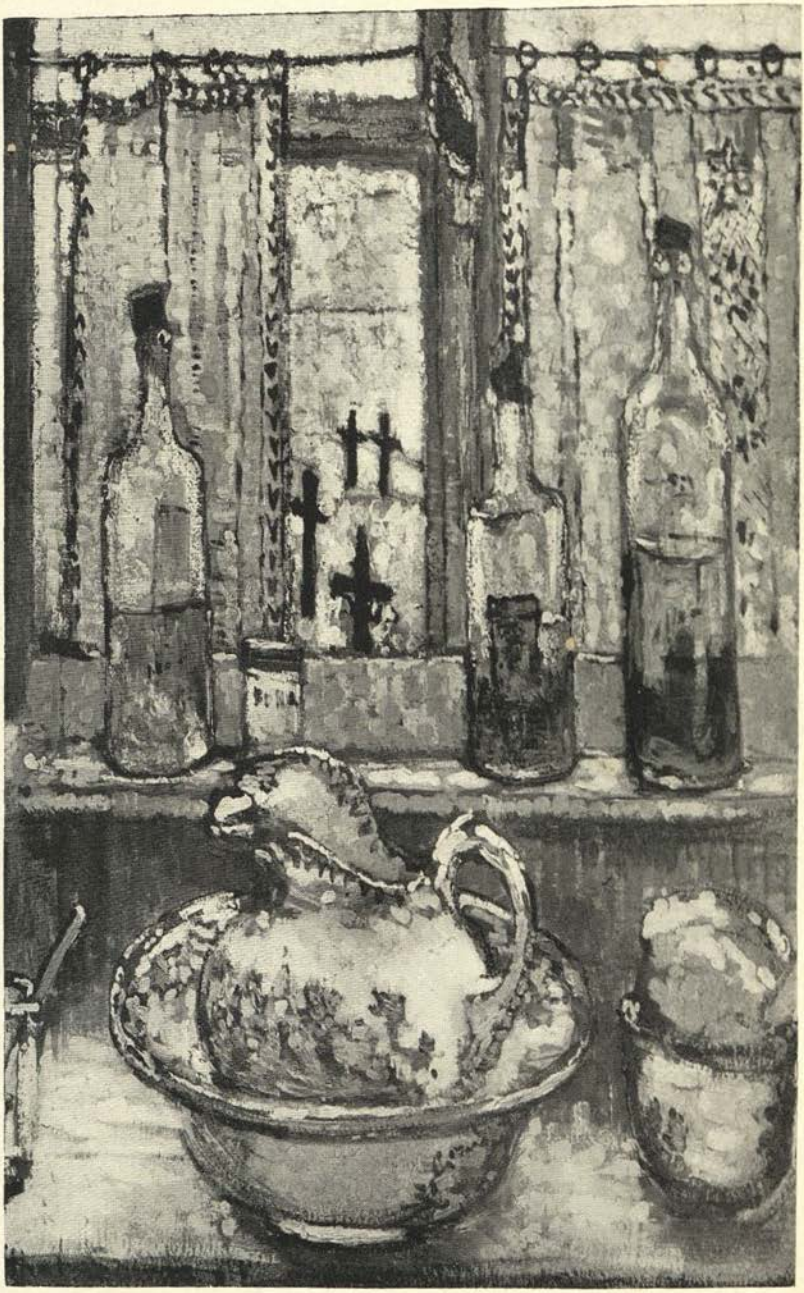
MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

HAROLD SQUIRE

HAROLD SQUIRE was born at Valparaiso in 1881, coming to England at the age of ten. He studied at the Slade School and at the classes conducted by Stanhope Forbes and by Augustus John and William Orpen, and also at Julian's, in Paris. Squire is a member of the New English Art Club, the London Group, and the Friday Club. He is represented in the Johannesburg Art Gallery, and in the collection of the Contemporary Art Society.



BRAND FELL HAROLD SQUIRE



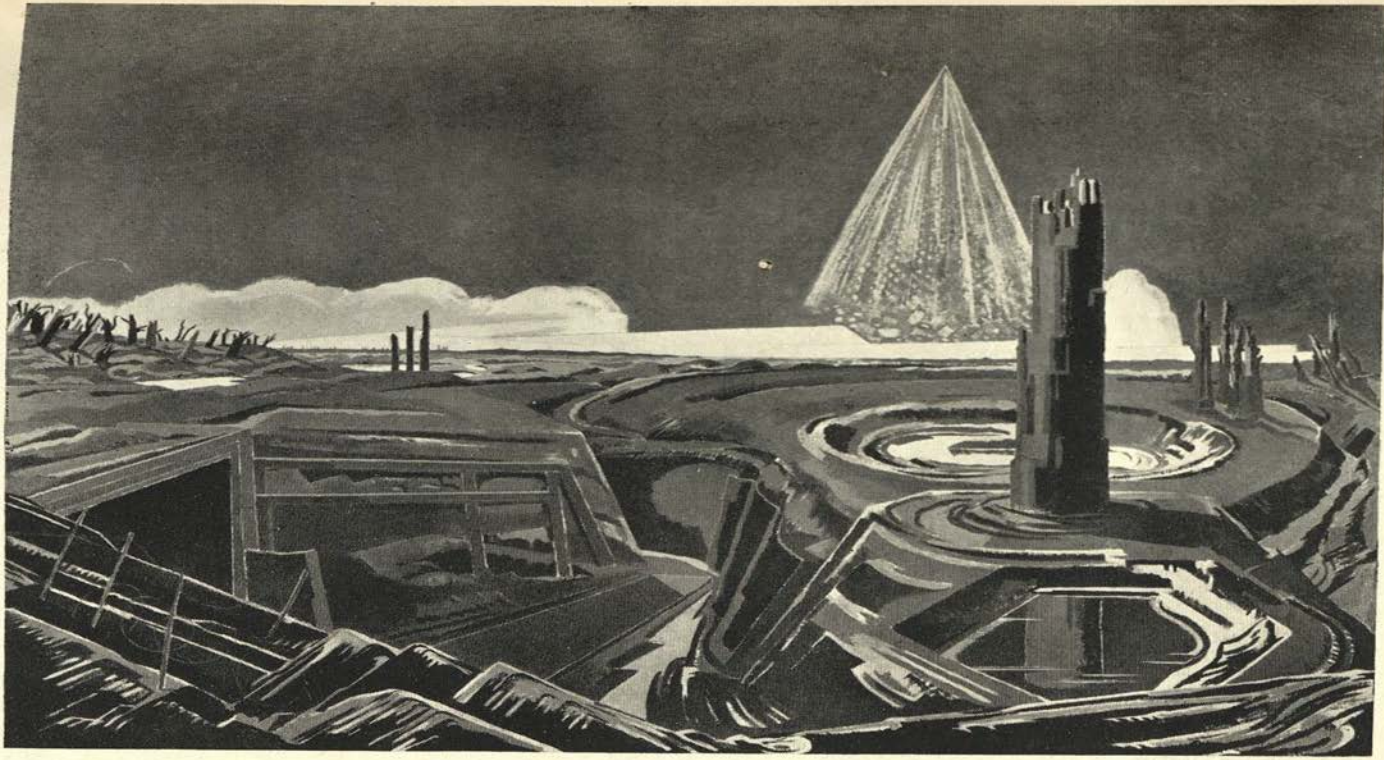
THE CHURCHYARD ETHEL SANDS

ETHEL SANDS

ETHEL SANDS was born at Newport, U.S.A., and trained in Paris, but is naturalised in England. She is a member of the London Group, and is best known as a painter of interiors and still life, particularly flowers.

PAUL NASH

PAUL NASH, who is elder brother of John Nash, was born in London in 1889. He was educated at St. Paul's School, and received his art training at the Bolt Court L.C.C. School, Fleet Street, and at the Slade School. He is a member of the New English Art Club and of the London Group, and is represented in the Imperial War Museum by fifteen works, and in the Canadian War Records collection by six. There are prints of his in the British Museum and in the Musée de la Guerre, France, and he is also represented in the collection of the Contemporary Art Society and in the Manchester Art Gallery.



NIGHT BOMBARDMENT PAUL NASH

WOOD INTERIOR

JOHN NASH

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

JOHN NASH

JOHN NASH, younger brother of Paul Nash, was born in London in 1893. He was educated at Wellington College, but did not attend any art school. John Nash served in the Artists' Rifles in France from 1916 to 1918, when he was commissioned to paint war pictures for the Imperial War Museum. His work in this connection includes the large canvas, " Oppy Wood," exhibited at Burlington House in 1919. He is also represented in the Leeds Art Gallery. His work as an illustrator includes drawings for a humorous book, " Dressing Gowns and Glue," by Capt. L. Sieveking. He is a member of the New English Art Club, the London Group, the Friday Club, and the newly-formed Society of English Wood Engravers.

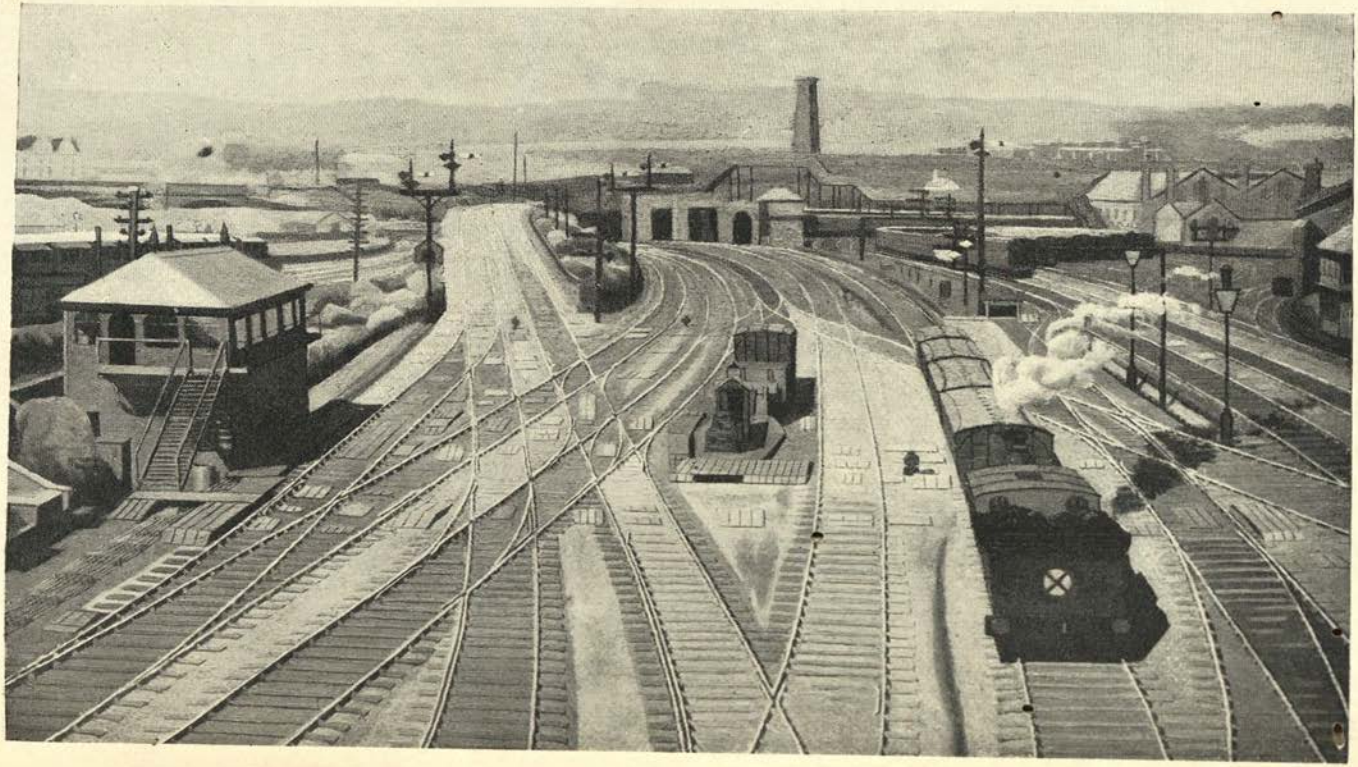
MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

ETHELBERT WHITE

ETHELBERT WHITE was born in 1891. He studied for a short time at the St. John's Wood Art School, but, becoming dissatisfied with the system, resolved to work out a method for himself. His great anxiety was to avoid falling under the influence of the French school, and to produce something really English. "The Quarriers," with its reference in spirit to the Pre-Raphaelites, is a characteristic illustration of these aims. White, who is a member of the London Group, spends most of his time in the country, either on foot or in a caravan.

QUARRIERS

ETHELBERT WHITE



KENTISH TOWN

E. M. O'R. DICKEY

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

E. M. O'R. DICKEY

E. M. O'R. DICKEY was born at Belfast in 1894, and studied painting under the late Harold Gilman at the Westminster School of Art.

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

RANDOLPH SCHWABE

RANDOLPH SCHWABE was born at Manchester in 1885. He studied at the Slade School, where he won a scholarship, and in Paris ; and exhibits regularly at the New English Art Club, of which he is a member ; the Friday Club and the London Group. Schwabe is represented in the Imperial War Museum, and a picture of his has been bought by the Contemporary Art Society. There is a selection of his prints in the British Museum.

BRAUNTON, DEVON RANDOLPH SCHWABE

THE COTSWOLD HILLS

BERNARD ADENEY

BERNARD ADENEY

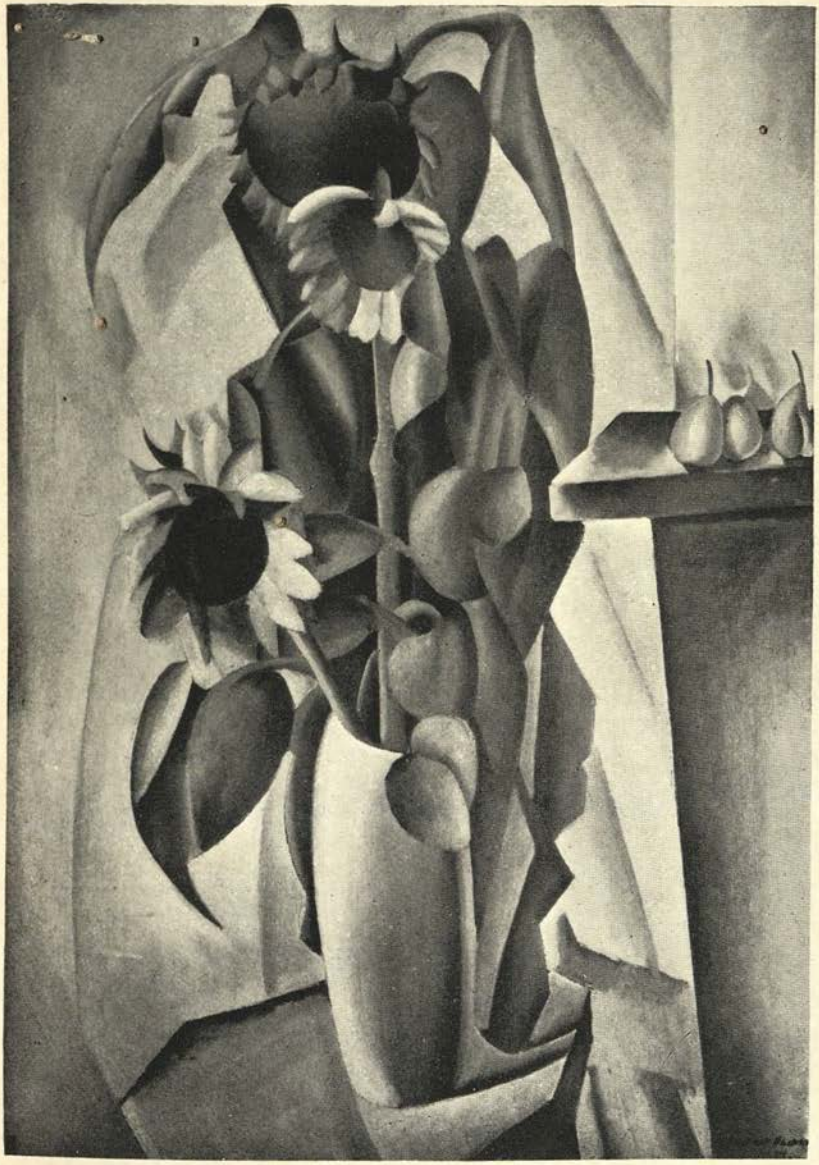
BERNARD ADENEY was trained at the Royal Academy Schools, in Paris and Italy, and finally at the Slade School; but attributes his real education to museums and exhibitions of modern art. He is an original member of the London Group, and exhibits there and at the Friday Club. Adeney has executed several wall paintings, at Plumstead Library, Chandos Hall, and the Borough Polytechnic, and the Contemporary Art Society has one of his paintings. He served for three years in the army, first in the Royal Engineers, and then in the Tank Corps, and finally did a set of drawings and paintings of Tanks in Training for the Imperial War Museum. His aim in art, as described by himself, is " to express in my work the unity of the visual experience and the mental response in the language of line, form and colour. I do not care to push my work to the complete residue of the Cubist, as I desire to utilise and retain recognisable objects in an intensified character; and yet by synthesis and co-relation to leave a work that is a single living entity."

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

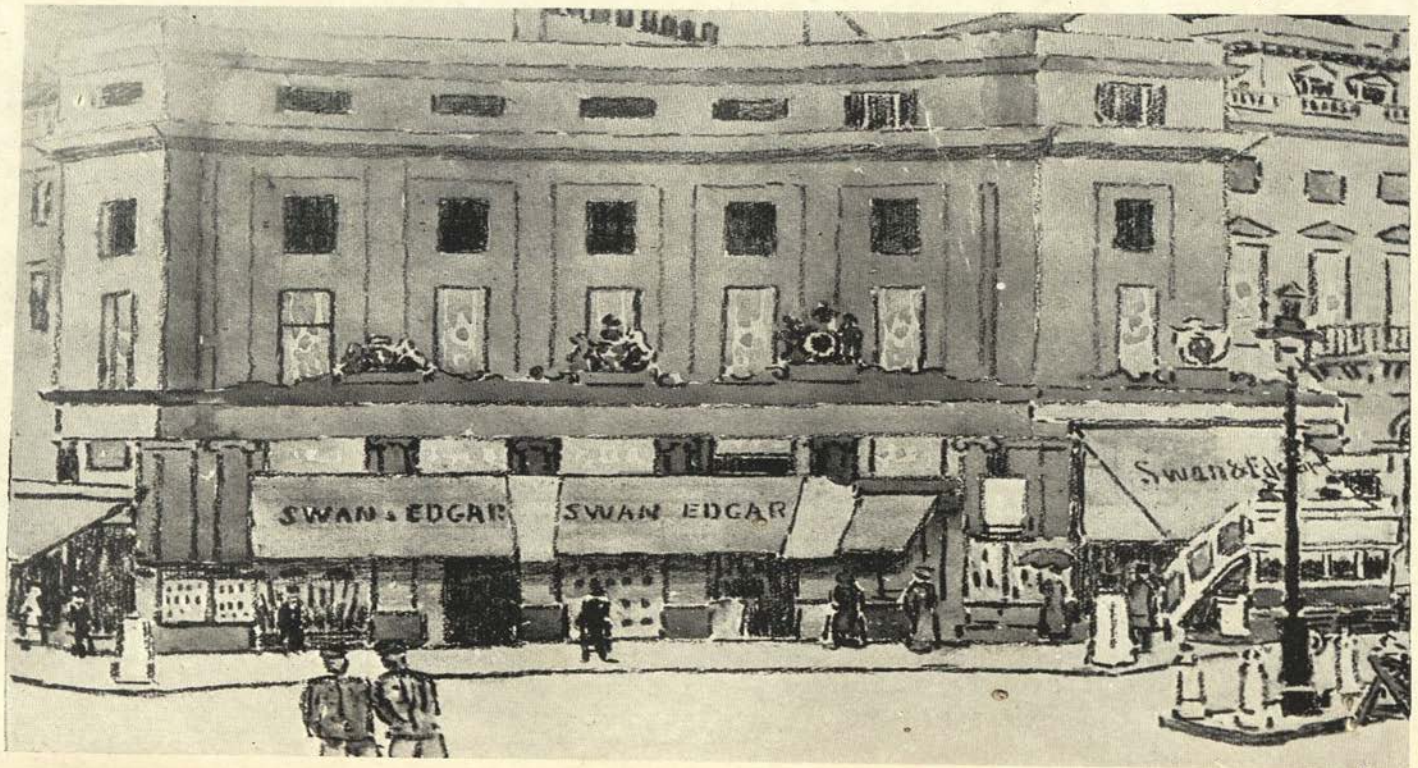
E. McKNIGHT KAUFFER

E. McKNIGHT KAUFFER was born at Great Falls, Montana, in 1890. His early artistic instincts were awakened by contact with Indians, who showed the child their decorative designs. After working for a time as assistant scenic artist with a travelling theatrical company, Kauffer got work in a San Francisco bookshop, painting in his spare time and attending the Art School in the evening. But though he worked here, and, later, at the Art Institute of Chicago and in Munich and Paris, he owes little to orthodox training. He first attracted attention with his poster designs in London. Most of his paintings have been exhibited by the London Group, but he is now a member of Group X, which seceded from that body a short time ago.

"Sunflowers" is a good example of the saner distortion which really adds intensity to the design. You feel that the meaning of the subject to the painter is conveyed with greater force than if he had represented it more closely. The forms of nature are freely translated but their essential character is preserved and even emphasised.



SUNFLOWERS E. McKNIGHT KAUFFER



PICCADILLY CIRCUS

WALTER TAYLOR

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

WALTER TAYLOR

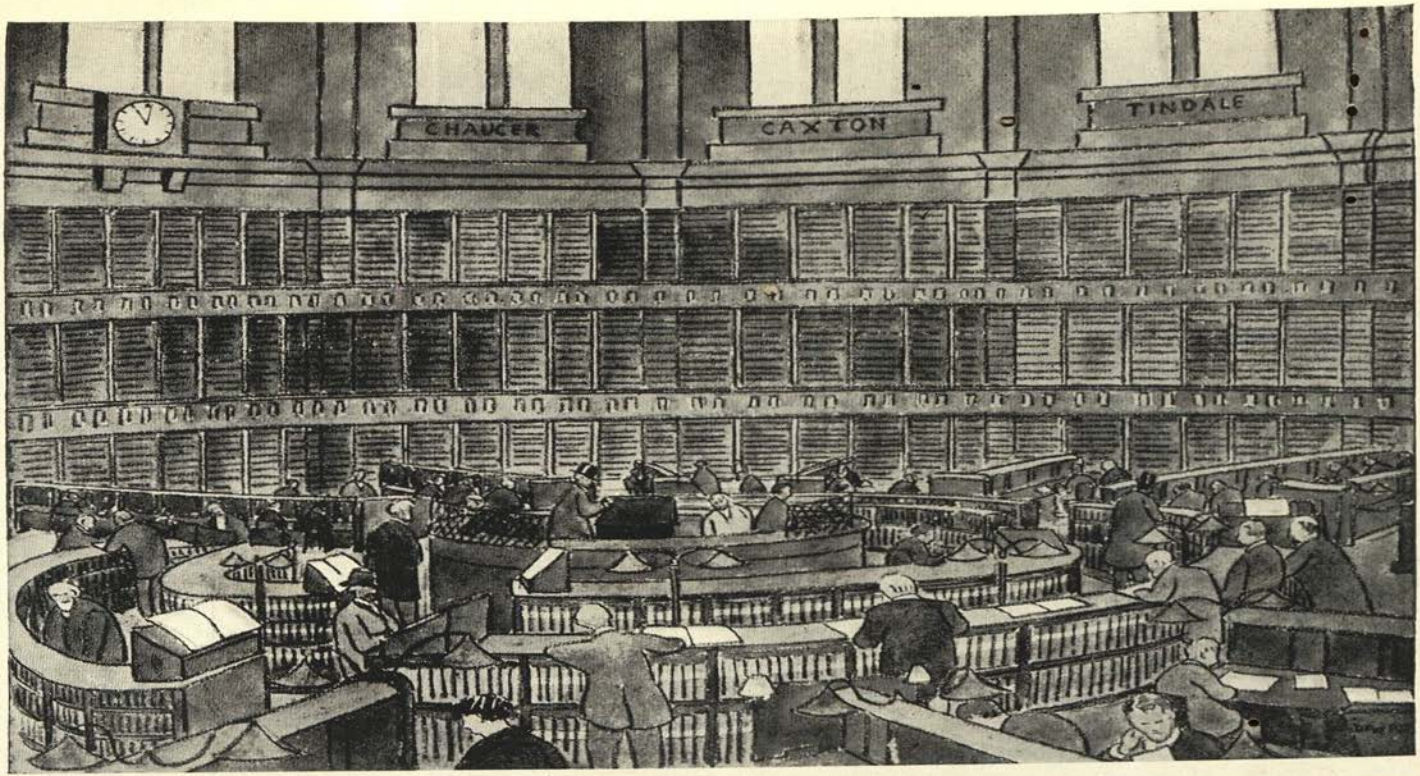
WALTER TAYLOR is a member of the London Group.

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

DOUGLAS FOX-PITT

DOUGLAS FOX-PITT studied for a few months at the Slade School, but regards nature as his chief master. He is a member of the London Group, and is represented in the British Museum Print Room by a water-colour of the Reading-Room ; in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, by a water-colour of Corfu ; in the Imperial War Museum by an oil painting of " The Indian Hospital, the Dome, Brighton " ; and at the Imperial Institute by some water-colours of Ceylon.

" The Reading-Room, British Museum," is a good example of the modern tendency to simplification. The artist has seized upon, and emphasised, the linear character of the subject that a painter of the last generation would have been inclined to obscure by aiming at effects of light and shade. Both as a design and from the point of view of reality, the picture gains by the treatment. The summary style of drawing gives to the figures an individuality that they would lack if drawn realistically on such a small scale.



READING-ROOM, BRITISH MUSEUM

DOUGLAS FOX-PITT

MOTHER AND CHILD BERNARD MENINSKY

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

BERNARD MENINSKY

BERNARD MENINSKY was born in 1891. He studied at the Liverpool School of Art, in Paris, and at the Slade School. On leaving the Slade School, Meninsky spent some time in Italy. He is a member of the London Group, and has exhibited regularly at the New English Art Club since 1913. He is represented in the Imperial War Museum by six paintings. Meninsky had his first one-man show at the Goupil Gallery in May, 1919, and John Lane has published a volume of his drawings. He is life-class instructor at the Westminster Technical Institute.

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

DUNCAN GRANT

DUNCAN GRANT was born at Rothiemurchus, Inverness, in 1885. He was trained at the Westminster School of Art, and in Paris, where he spent a year from 1906 to 1907. Grant has exhibited at the New English Art Club and the London Group ; and he was represented in the second Post-Impressionist exhibition at the Grafton Galleries in 1913.

FLOWER-PIECE DUNCAN GRANT

STILL-LIFE VANESSA BELL

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

VANESSA BELL

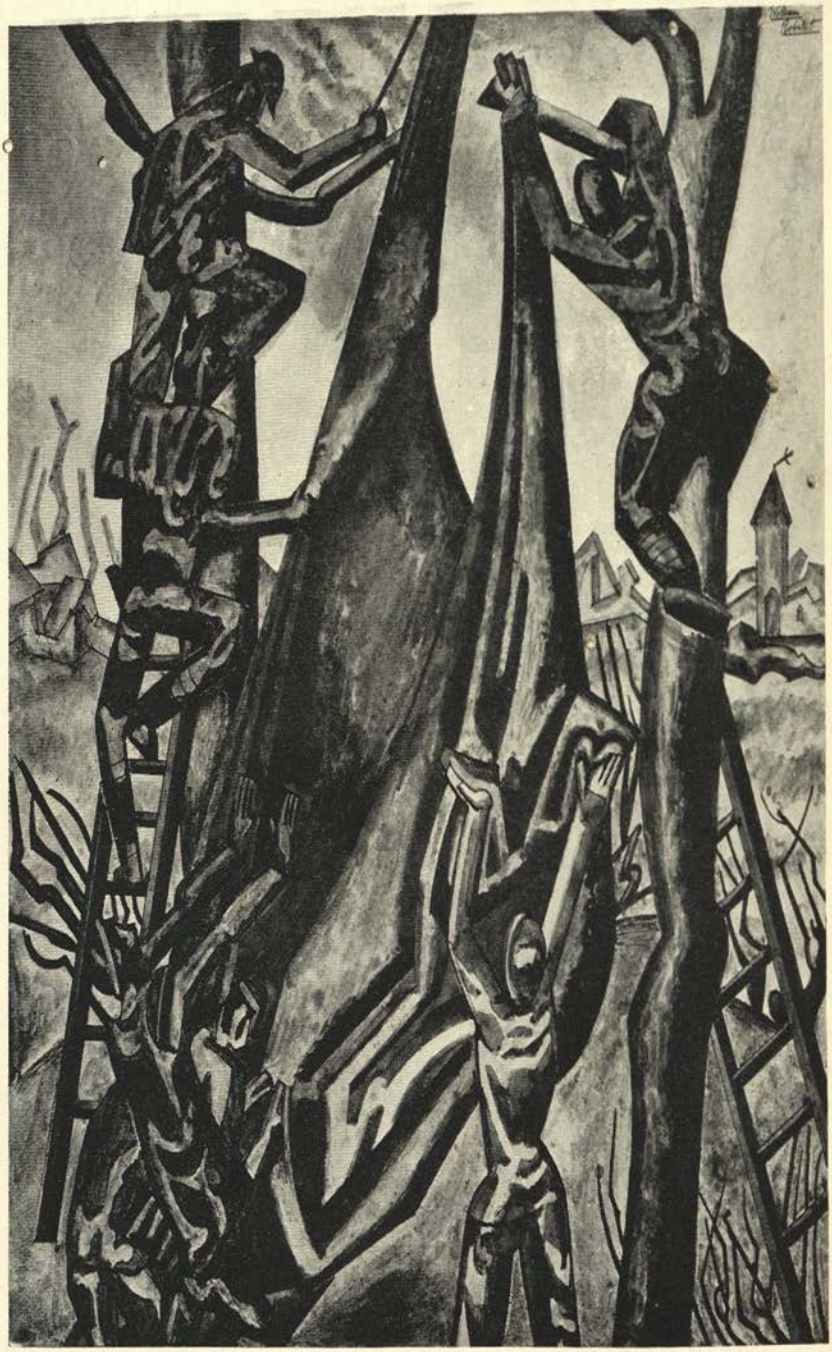
VANESSA BELL was born in London in 1879. She studied under Arthur S. Cope, R.A., and at the Royal Academy Schools. Miss Bell exhibits at the New English Art Club, the Friday Club, and the London Group; and she was represented in the second Post-Impressionist exhibition at the Grafton Galleries in 1913.

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

EDWARD WADSWORTH

EDWARD WADSWORTH was born at Clock Neaton, Yorkshire, in 1889. He studied at Munich and then at the Slade School, where he took the first prize for figure painting in 1911. He first exhibited in London at the New English Art Club, and has contributed regularly to the exhibitions of the Friday Club, the London Group, and the newly-formed Group X. During the war, Wadsworth served in the Navy in the Eastern Mediterranean, and later superintending the camouflaging of ships at Bristol and Liverpool. He did a large painting of camouflaged ships for the Canadian War Memorials.

LADLE SLAG — EDWARD WADSWORTH



HOISTING CAMOUFLAGE WILLIAM ROBERTS

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

WILLIAM ROBERTS

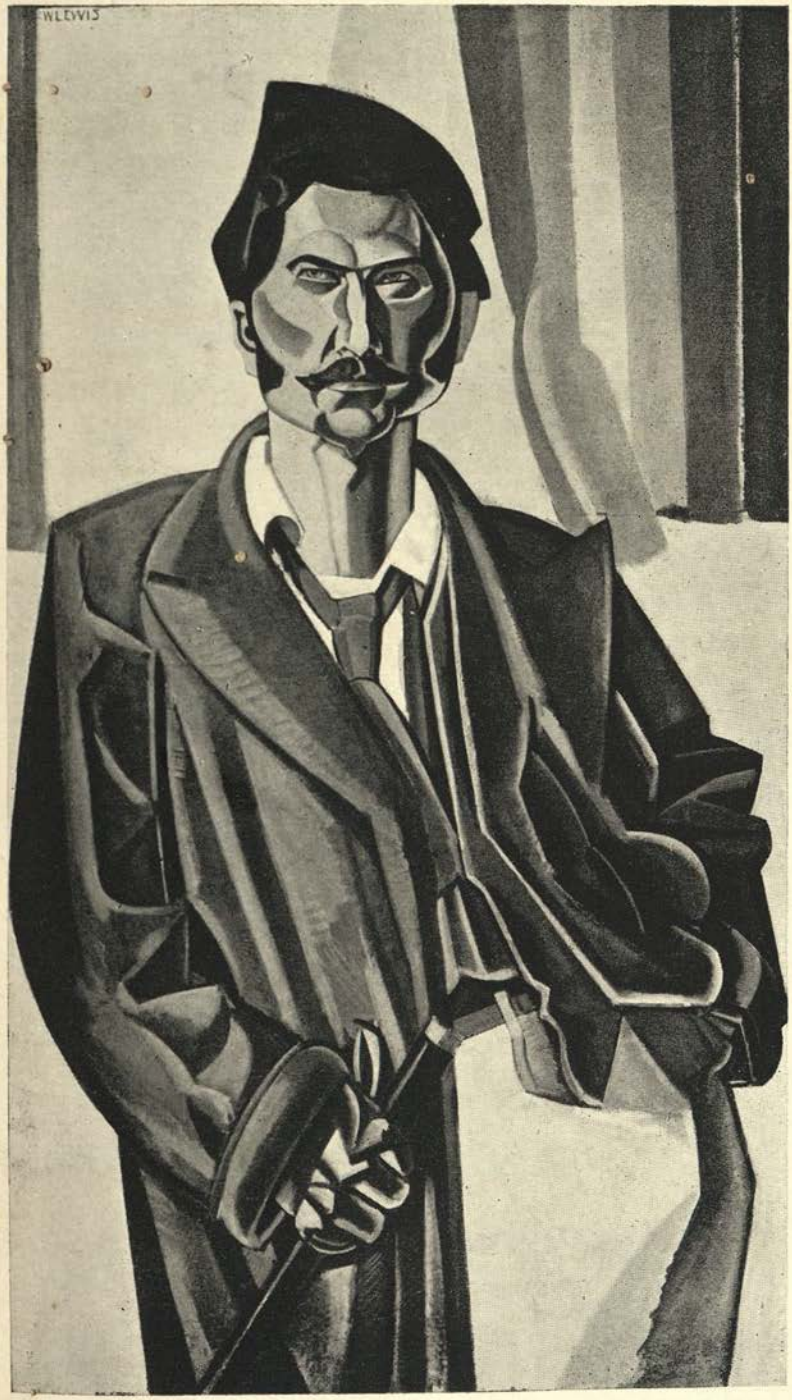
WILLIAM ROBERTS was born in London in 1895, being the son of a carpenter. At the age of sixteen he won an L.C.C. scholarship for drawing, and studied for three years at the Slade School. Roberts is a member of Group X., and a regular exhibitor at the New English Art Club. He is represented in the Imperial War Museum and in the Canadian War Memorials.

"Hoisting Camouflage" is a good example of the severe reduction to the essentials of form that is characteristic of the Vorticists. The facts of nature are accepted but re-presented in their concentrated extract for the purpose of design.

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

WYNDHAM LEWIS

WYNDHAM LEWIS was born in America in 1884. He was educated at Rugby, and received his artistic training at the Slade School, where he won a scholarship at the age of sixteen, being the youngest student to secure it. After leaving the Slade, Lewis travelled and studied in Holland, Spain, and France. Originally a member of the London Group, he joined in the formation of Group X in 1920. He is represented in the Victoria and Albert Museum and in the John Quinn Collection, New York. Lewis gives the following account of his artistic belief: "There is a durable simplicity underneath every diverse phenomenon. Our aim to-day must be to establish first what we consider most characteristic of that that is important in the consciousness and form-content of our time; then to dig to the durable simplicity by which that can be most grandly and distinctly expressed."



EZRA POUND WYNDHAM LEWIS

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

CHRISTOPHER RICHARD WYNNE NEVINSON

CHRISTOPHER RICHARD WYNNE NEVINSON was born at Hampstead in 1889. He is the son of Henry W. Nevinson, the well known author and war correspondent. After leaving Uppingham, he studied at the St. John's Wood School of Art, the Slade School, and finally in Paris, exhibiting his first picture in London in 1910. Since then he has exhibited continuously at the New English Art Club, the London Group, and the Friday Club, and in Paris and America. After serving in France and Flanders, Nevinson was appointed official War Artist. He had his first exhibition of war paintings at the Leicester Galleries in 1916 and a second in 1918. Ten of his pictures are in the Imperial War Museum, and five among the Canadian War Memorials. He is represented by etchings and lithographs in the British Museum, the Tate Gallery, the Luxembourg, and in the public galleries of Manchester, Dublin, and Leeds.

" La Mitrailleuse " is a particularly good example of Nevinson's power of adapting Post-Impressionist principles to his needs. It shows how realistic painting can be made even more " real " by intelligent emphasis. The compact design and the angular treatment of shadows enhance the effect of iron determination at a critical moment.

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

ROGER FRY

ROGER FRY was born in 1866, being the son of the Rt. Hon. Sir Edward Fry. He was educated at Clifton College, and at King's College, Cambridge. After taking a degree in science, he devoted himself to art; studying under Francis Bate and subsequently in Paris. Fry, who is equally well known as a writer and lecturer on art as a painter, was responsible for the Post-Impressionist exhibitions at the Grafton Galleries, His publications include "Giovanni Bellini" and "Reynolds' Discourses." He is co-editor of *The Burlington Magazine*, and managing director of the Omega Workshops, Ltd.

"Poinsettia" may be described as a decorative study in character. The design is worked out from the actual character of the plant forms, very much as a musician would work out a composition from a sequence of notes that he himself did not invent.

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

MARK GERTLER

MARK GERTLER was born in 1892. He studied at the Slade School, winning the Slade Scholarship in 1911 and the British Institute Scholarship in 1912. In 1914 his "Fruit Sorters" was bought by the Contemporary Art Society. Gertler is a member of the London Group.

Apart from its excellent colour, "Agapanthus" is interesting as an attempt to intensify reality by simplification and a very slight formality of treatment. The result is much firmer than if all the minor accidents of contour and tone had been reproduced.

MODERN MOVEMENTS IN PAINTING

JACOB KRAMER

JACOB KRAMER was born at Klincy, a small agricultural village in Little Russia, in 1892. Both his father and uncle were well-known painters, and his mother was a Russian operatic artist. In 1900 his parents came to England and settled in Leeds, where Jacob studied at the School of Art, winning the junior scholarship in 1908 and the senior in 1911. The following year the Education Aid Society sent him to study at the Slade School. His first picture, "Mother and Child," was exhibited at the New English Art Club in 1914; and since then he has exhibited regularly at the London Group, the Allied Artists' Association, and at the Glasgow Society of Artists and Sculptors. In March, 1920, his works, "Pogroms" and "The Day of Atonement," were presented to the Leeds City Art Gallery by the Jewish community of that city.

ALFRED WOLMARK

ALFRED WOLMARK was born in Poland in 1874. He is a British subject, and studied for a time at the Royal Academy Schools, , exhibiting regularly at the Academy, mainly portraits or studies of Jewish life in East London. Later he developed a more decorative manner, still taking many of his subjects from every-day life but working them out in vivid colour. He has done a good deal of applied decoration in pottery and other materials, and has attracted attention as a designer in stained glass.

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